

BBC

AMAZING ENCOUNTERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

HiSTORY

MAGAZINE

THE HISTORIANS' VIEW

£4.80 • August 2016 • www.historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine

Why has Britain decided to leave the EU?

Eleanor of Aquitaine

How this medieval queen took on Europe's most powerful men



COLD WAR OLYMPICS

The Czech runner who defied the communist elite

The plot to kill King Charles II



David Cameron chooses his history hero

PLUS

HOLIDAYS WITH HITLER

ON BOARD THE NAZI CRUISE LINER





THE HISTORY THAT SHAPED US



FASCINATING
TOURS ALL
OVER THE
WORLD —
PRICES FROM
AS LITTLE
AS £1,250

BROTHERS IN ARMS | THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Go further than the sites themselves, and learn the stories of the artists and poets — including Hemingway and Orwell — who followed their consciences to Spain to fight fascism... *Sat 15th – Sat 22nd October 2016 | £2,445 | Guide Lecturer: Jason Webster*



Warriors of Christ | The Knights Templar

Discover the story of the rise and fall of the Templars across associated sites in France.

10th – 17th September 2016 | £2,295 inc. flights



The Darts of Love

Follow the lives of Henry's unfortunate queens through the places most associated with them.

20th – 27th September 2016 | £2,495 inc. flights



Churchill's Warriors

Uncover the fascinating tales of the women who were members of the secret SOE.

29th Sep – 3rd Oct 2016 | £1,495 inc. flights

Expert led tours across the world - exploring over 1,000 years of history. Call, email or visit us online.

Call: 01722 713820 • Email: info@historicaltrips.com • www.historicaltrips.com



AUGUST 2016

WELCOME

BBC **HiSTORY**
MAGAZINE

“ So often in this magazine we tell the stories of the kings who dominate the history of medieval Europe. In what was a patriarchal society, few women had the opportunity to wield power in the same way as their male counterparts. One of the most remarkable exceptions was **Eleanor of Aquitaine**. A wife to two kings and a mother to two – arguably three – more, she was also a redoubtable figure in her own right: joining a crusade, rebelling against her husband, and fighting to secure the crown for her sons Richard the Lionheart and King John. In this month's cover feature (page 28), historian Lindy Grant charts Eleanor's eventful life.

Not long before we went to press came the momentous news of Britain's vote in favour of leaving the **European Union**. While it is of course too soon to know what the full implications of this decision will be, it certainly seems set to become one of the defining episodes of our age. Beginning on page 14, we've put together a special feature where a group of experts consider the historical context of Brexit.

Whether in or out of the EU, one thing that remains constant is Britain's propensity for dreary summer weather.

We can at least be thankful that we didn't live through the **summer of 1816**, when the aftermath of a volcanic eruption left millions of Britons feeling wet and chilly. On page 54 Robert Hume takes the temperature of the rather glum nation 200 years ago.



Rob Attar

Editor

BSME Editor of the Year 2015, Special Interest Brand

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



Michael Scott

History is so often studied in isolated chunks, but that is not how it was experienced. Instead I want to offer an ancient global history, one that helps us understand how much we have always owed to interaction with one another.

● *Michael reveals how ancient cultures interacted on page 43*



Lindy Grant

I have had to think about Eleanor of Aquitaine while writing my book on her granddaughter, Blanche of Castile. Both were such formidably powerful women, even in the 'man's world' of the Middle Ages.

● *Lindy traces Eleanor of Aquitaine's remarkable life on page 28*



Roger Moorhouse

The story of the *Wilhelm Gustloff* is usually told as a straight disaster tale. However, its wider history tells us much about how the Third Reich functioned; about how it seduced its people. It is this story that I wanted to tell.

● *Roger discusses Nazi-sponsored summer holidays on page 24*

historyextra.com

The history website in association with *BBC History Magazine*

Weekly podcast

Download episodes for free from iTunes and other providers, or via our website: historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine/podcasts

History Extra Weekly

Catch up on the latest history stories with our free iPad/iPhone app. Search for 'History Extra' in the app store

Our digital editions

BBC History Magazine is available for the Kindle, Kindle Fire, iPad/iPhone, Google Play and Zinio. Find us in your app store or visit the website: historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine/digital



Facebook and Twitter

twitter.com/historyextra

facebook.com/historyextra

Collector's Edition: The Queen

Read our guide to the life and times of Queen Elizabeth II. Buy it for £9.99, and subscribers get free UK P+P*. Order at buysubscriptions.com/queen or call us on 0844 844 0250**



CONTACT US

PHONE Subscriptions & back issues

0844 844 0250 – *Those with impaired hearing can call Minicom 01795 414561*

Editorial 0117 314 7377

EMAIL Subscriptions & back issues

bbchistorymag@servicehelpline.co.uk

Editorial historymagazine@historyextra.com

POST Subscriptions & back issues

BBC History Magazine, PO Box 279, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8DF

Basic annual subscription rates:

UK: £62.40, Eire/Europe: £64.60, ROW:

£66.60 **Editorial** *BBC History Magazine*,

Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited,

Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN



In the US/Canada you can contact us

at: PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037



BHcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com,

britsubs.com/history, Toll-free 800-342-3592

*Subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* receive FREE UK P&P on this collector's edition. Prices including postage are: £11.49 for all other UK residents, £12.99 for Europe and £13.49 for Rest of World (please note that unfortunately this special edition is not available for direct order in the US and Canada but is available in many good retailers now). All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery **Calls will cost 7p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge. Lines are open 8am–8pm weekdays & 9am–1pm Saturday

AUGUST 2016

CONTENTS

Features



Historians offer their perspective on Britain's vote to leave the EU, on page 14

24 Holidays with Hitler

Roger Moorhouse reveals how the Nazis tried to win over Germany's masses with cheap vacations in the sun

28 Eleanor of Aquitaine

Lindy Grant examines the extraordinary and colourful life of one of the medieval world's most powerful women

38 Soldiers of the apocalypse

Robert Hutchinson investigates the Fifth Monarchists, the religious fanatics bent on murdering Charles II in 1661

43 Ancient encounters

Trade, education, religion and politics: Michael Scott looks at five of the ancient world's most important cultural exchanges

50 The running revolutionary

Superstar Czech athlete Emil Zátopek ran into the record books - and into trouble with the communist authorities. Richard Askwith finds out more

54 The year without summer

Endless months of freezing temperatures and torrential rain. What on earth was happening in 1816? asks Robert Hume

58 Reign of the red terror

Robert Bickers describes how Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution unleashed years of hell on China's citizens

Every month

6 ANNIVERSARIES

11 HISTORY NOW

11 The latest history news

14 Historians give their views on Britain's relationship with Europe

20 LETTERS

23 MICHAEL WOOD'S VIEW

34 OUR FIRST WORLD WAR

65 BOOKS

New history titles reviewed, plus Anne Sebba talks about her book on women's lives in occupied Paris

77 TV & RADIO

The pick of new history programmes

80 OUT & ABOUT

80 History Explorer: the Cold War

85 Five things to do in August

86 My favourite place: Vézelay

93 MISCELLANY

93 Q&A and quiz

94 Samantha's recipe corner

95 Prize crossword

98 MY HISTORY HERO

Prime minister David Cameron picks flying ace Douglas Bader

36 SUBSCRIBE

Save when you subscribe today



USPS Identification Statement BBC HISTORY (ISSN 1469-8552) (USPS 024-177) August 2016 is published 13 times a year under licence from BBC Worldwide by Immediate Media Company Bristol Ltd, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN, UK. Distributed in the US by Circulation Specialists, Inc., 2 Corporate Drive, Suite 945, Shelton CT 06484-6238. Periodicals postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE, PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495.



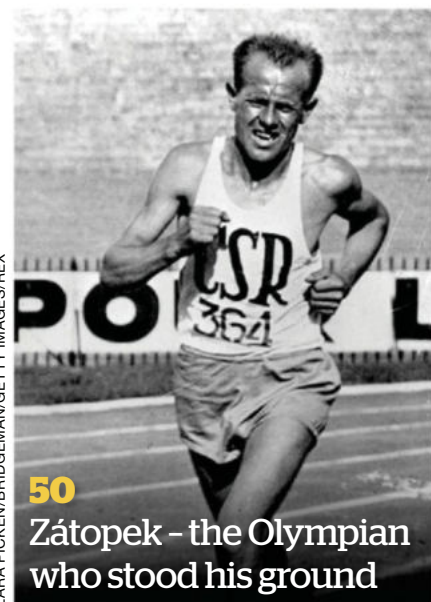
43

What happened when ancient civilisations collided?



58

The terrible cost of the Cultural Revolution



50

Zátopek - the Olympian who stood his ground

ZARA PICKEN/BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES/REX



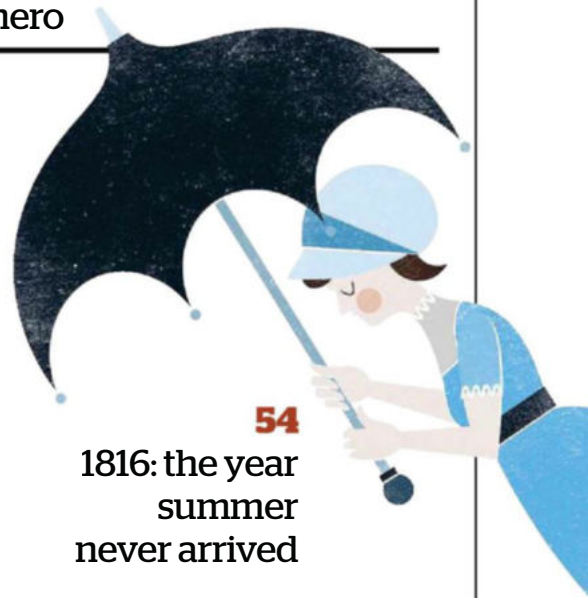
98

David Cameron
names his history hero



24

How cheap Nazi holidays
seduced Germany



54

1816: the year
summer
never arrived



28

**“WHO WAS THIS
WOMAN WHO COULD
INSPIRE SUCH FAITH
AND SUCH FEAR?”**

Dominic Sandbrook highlights events that took place in **August** in history

ANNIVERSARIES

9 August 1974

Richard Nixon resigns

The Republican leader becomes the most high-profile casualty of the Watergate scandal – and the only president to step down

On his last night as president of the US, Richard Nixon slept badly. As happened so often during his embattled presidency, he sat up into the small hours. The telephone was clutched to his ear as he asked old friends for their reactions to the resignation announcement he had made a few hours before. At two o'clock, Nixon made his last call, then sat alone, brooding in the shadows.

Shortly after nine on the morning of Friday 9 August 1974, Nixon led his family into the East Room of the White House to bid farewell to his loyal staff. Just under two years after his landslide re-election, his presidency was over – destroyed by the Watergate scandal.

Now, exhausted from lack of sleep and perspiring beneath the television lights,

Nixon launched into an emotional tribute to his father, “a little man, common man”, and his mother, “a saint”. The room was silent. “The greatness comes and you are really tested,” Nixon said, “when you take some knocks, some disappointments, when sadness comes. Because only if you have been in the deepest valley can you ever know how magnificent it is to be on the highest mountain.”

And then, at last, it was over. Many of Nixon’s staff were in r B the secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, had lost patience with his master’s appetite for self-flagellation. “It was horrifying and heartbreaking,” he wrote later. “I was at the same time moved to tears and outraged at being put through the wringer once again.”



24 August AD 79

Pompeii is engulfed by ash

Vesuvius erupts with furious violence and devastating results

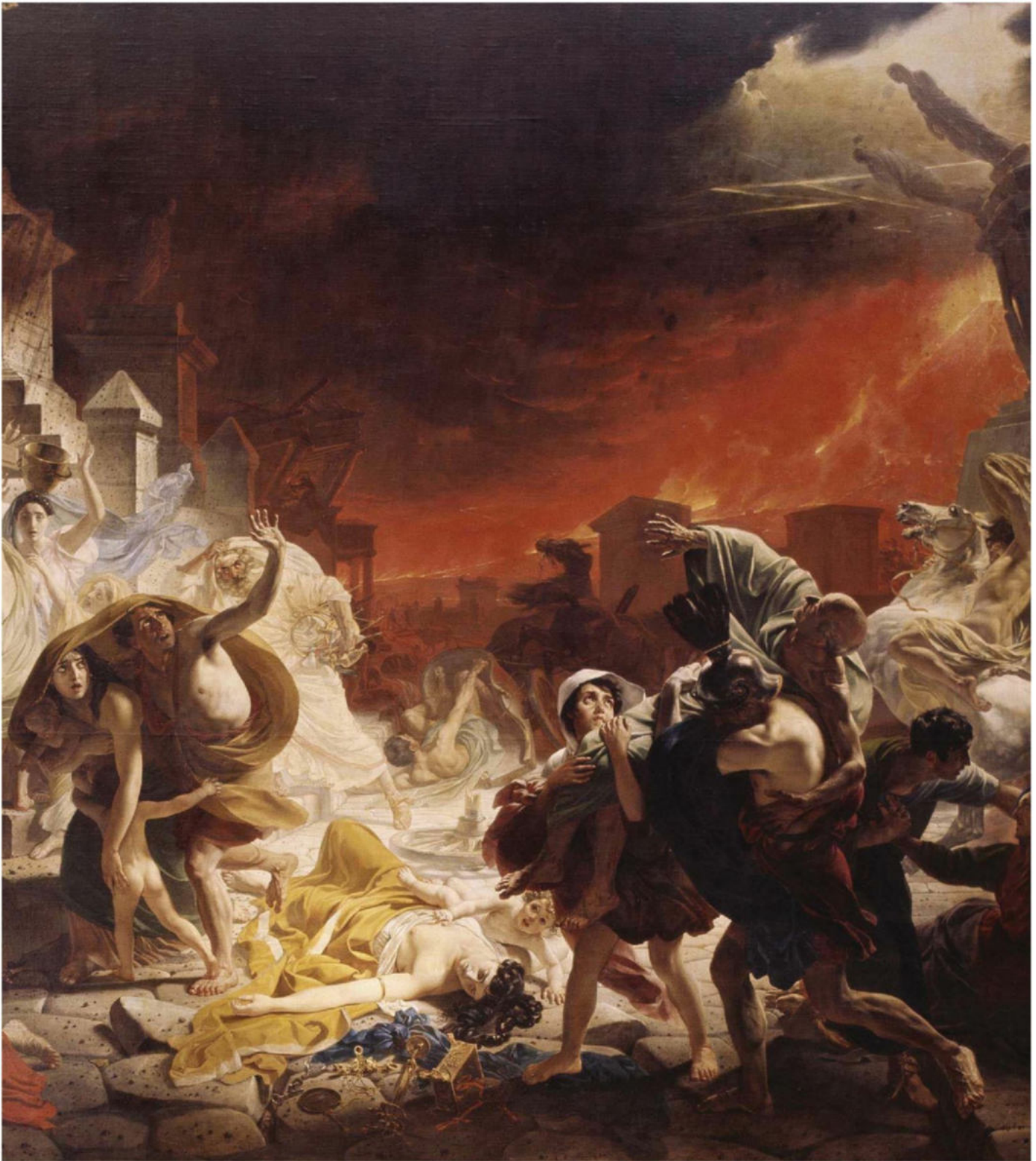
On the afternoon of 24 August 79, the commander of the Roman fleet, Pliny the Elder, was at home in Misenum at the northern end of the Bay of Naples. He was working on some papers after a leisurely lunch when his sister noticed “a cloud of unusual size and appearance”, rising above the peak of Vesuvius. Pliny immediately called for a boat but, even before he had set out, a message arrived from the town at the foot of the mountain where residents were terrified of the looming cloud.

By the time Pliny had crossed the bay to the town of Stabiae, it was obvious that something terrible was afoot. Vesuvius now seemed ablaze, wrote Pliny’s nephew, known as Pliny the Younger, while “ashes were already falling, hotter and thicker as the ships drew near, followed by bits of pumice and blackened stones, charred and cracked by the flames”. With ash filling the sky, the unnatural darkness seemed “blacker and denser than any ordinary night”.

Barely three miles away on the volcano’s fertile slopes stood Pompeii. That wealthy town was no stranger to disaster – it had been damaged by an earthquake just 17 years earlier – but as the ash began to fall, it was obvious that this was far, far worse. Almost certainly thousands were killed, though the true figure will never be known. Even at Misenum, where the elder Pliny’s relatives waited in vain for his return – he collapsed and died in the chaos – utter panic took hold. “You could hear the shrieks of women, the wailing of infants, and the shouting of men; some were calling their parents, others their children or their wives,” wrote Pliny’s nephew. It felt, he added, as though “the whole world was dying with me, and I with it.”

GETTY IMAGES

Dominic Sandbrook is a historian and presenter. His new series about Britain in the 1980s is due to air this summer on BBC Two



The Last Day of Pompeii (1830), by Russian painter Karl Bryullov, was inspired by the artist's visit to the site in 1828. The town was buried by volcanic ash after Vesuvius erupted in AD 79, killing large numbers of residents

GETTY IMAGES

4 August 1902

After three years of work, the **Greenwich Foot Tunnel**, one of the marvels of late Victorian engineering, opens beneath the river Thames.



15 August 1248

Archbishop Konrad von Hochstanden lays the foundation stone of **Cologne's cathedral**, which becomes one of Germany's most famous landmarks.



23 August 30 BC

Caesarion (left), son of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra, and last of the Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt, **is executed by Roman troops** in Alexandria.



The discovery of the mutilated body of Mary Ann Nichols, shown in an illustration from the sensationalist newspaper *Famous Crimes*

31 August 1888

Mary Ann Nichols becomes the first victim of 'Jack the Ripper'

The body of a homeless prostitute, brutally murdered and mutilated, is discovered in a Whitechapel backstreet

As London's bells rang in the last day of August 1888, rain was falling. It had been one of the wettest summers in living memory, and there was thunder in the air. On the horizon a fierce red glow seared the sky above Shadwell, where a huge fire had broken out in the dry dock.

Some time between one and two o'clock that morning, a woman called Mary Ann Nichols, known to her friends

as 'Polly', was thrown out of the kitchen of the shabby lodging house at 18 Thrawl Street, Spitalfields. Fate had dealt Polly a rough hand. A 43-year-old mother of five children, she was separated from her husband and now drifted from one workhouse to another, scratching a meagre existence from handouts and casual prostitution.

Short of the four pence she needed to

pay for a bed in the lodging house, Polly once more found herself on the street. "Never mind," she said, gesturing at the velvet-trimmed straw bonnet she was wearing. "I'll soon get my doss money. See what a jolly bonnet I've got now." The implication was clear: she was heading back out to find a punter.

An hour or so later, Polly was seen by one of her roommates on the corner of Whitechapel Road, clearly drunk. She had made her doss money three times over, she boasted, but had already spent it on gin and was off to make some more.

That was the last time Mary Ann Nichols was seen alive. At 3.40am, a carter found her lying in the darkened doorway of a stable. Her throat had been slit and her body horribly mutilated. The murderer who would later be dubbed 'Jack the Ripper' had claimed his first victim.

18 August 1587

The first baby is born to English settlers in the Americas

Virginia Dare is welcomed to the ill-fated Roanoke colony

In the summer of 1587, an English fleet sailed towards Roanoke Island, just off the coast of what's now North Carolina. It was led by John White, a gentleman artist and friend of the Elizabethan explorer Sir Walter Raleigh, who had been sent to establish a colony in the New World. Some 114 potential settlers accompanied him, among them his daughter, Eleanor, and her husband, Ananias Dare, a bricklayer from London.

On 18 August, in what must have been basic conditions, Eleanor gave birth to a daughter. The girl was christened Virginia, after the English settlement in North America – itself named after Elizabeth I's sobriquet: the 'virgin queen'. Virginia was the first child born to white English-speaking parents anywhere in the Americas.



More than 100 settlers sailed from England in 1587 to establish the Virginia Colony in North America, building houses and starting families – but within three years they had vanished

ILLUSTRATION BY LYNN HATZIUS

If her grandfather was delighted, his joy did not last. Only nine days after her birth, White sailed for England, hoping to secure supplies and support for his struggling venture. Delayed by storms and Spanish ships, he did not return for three years, landing – with a grim twist – on the date of Virginia's third birthday. To his horror he found the settlement deserted, with no sign of life. The settlers, including his daughter and granddaughter, had simply disappeared.

What happened to the settlers will surely never be known. Yet little Virginia has become a near-legendary figure in the US, celebrated with stamps, coins, bridges and parks. A popular folk myth holds that Virginia was adopted by Native Americans, magically turned into a white doe and then accidentally killed by a hunter. So whenever a white doe is spotted near Roanoke Island, locals maintain that it is the spirit of Virginia Dare. ■

COMMENT / Mark Nicholls

"The blank canvas of Virginia's life offers scope for promotion of political causes"

“ We know nothing about Virginia Dare, other than the names of her parents and the date and place of her birth. Like every other member of the colony on Roanoke, she vanishes both from the record and, it seems, from the face of the Earth. Virginia's parents were, as far as we can judge, unremarkable people; it is the circumstances of her birth that make her remarkable, the blank canvas of her life offering scope for the promotion of political and social causes, for romantic novelists, playwrights and

conspiracy theorists.

Virginia was not the first white child to be born on the eastern seaboard of North America – even discounting possible Viking settlement in present-day Canada centuries earlier. The Spanish had planted a colony in Florida some 20 years before the English landed on Roanoke. She was, however, the first American child of English parents.

The 'Lost Colony' might have been seen by contemporaries as an end rather than a beginning. England was thereafter absorbed in an

attritional war against Catholic Spain, while, following the failure of his colony, Raleigh turned his attentions to ventures closer to home. As soon as he acquired land in England he lost interest in the Americas, and in the short term no one else picked up the challenge. An English colony in North America did not take root until the Jamestown venture in 1607, and even this came close to disaster in its early years. Virginia Dare's symbolic significance would not be appreciated for a very long time. **”**

Mark Nicholls teaches early modern history at St John's College, Cambridge

ONE CELEBRATION, THREE UNIQUE EXHIBITIONS

Fashioning A REIGN

90 YEARS OF STYLE FROM
THE QUEEN'S WARDROBE

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

23 July – 2 October 2016

WINDSOR CASTLE

17 September 2016 – 8 January 2017

PALACE OF
HOLYROODHOUSE

Until 16 October 2016



www.royalcollection.org.uk
0303 123 7329  

**1-YEAR
PASS**

Enjoy free re-admission for a year by asking us to treat your ticket purchase as a donation.

HISTORY NOW

Have a story? Please email Matt Elton at matt.elton@immediate.co.uk



Red in the night

The Great Fire of London depicted in a 20th-century painting. A new study shows that, rather than being the last massive fire to sweep the city, the blaze was a sign of things to come

The explosive cocktail that fuelled the Great Fire of London

Poor-quality housing has long taken the blame for the 1666 blaze. But could the true culprit have been the city's rapid industrialisation?

By Matt Elton

We all think we know what took place in London in September 1666, so famous have the events since become: a fire, started in Pudding Lane, spread rapidly through the city's streets thanks to closely built, poor-quality housing. Such was the blaze's severity, it finally prompted authorities and residents to act, bringing to an end a long series of ruinous fires in the city.

Yet new research suggests that 1666 was far from the last time that London faced

fiery destruction, and that there may have been more surprising ingredients fuelling the conflagrations. Professor David Garrioch of Monash University in Australia has compiled a history of the city's fires across hundreds of years. The results were unexpected: while London had comparatively few serious fires between the start of the 13th century and the 1630s, there were more than 50 in the 200 years after 1666.

Garrioch says: "The Great Fire *was* a major turning point, but not because it



Going up in smoke This 18th-century advertisement for tobacco shows a Virginia planter and distillery. As the quantity of volatile products being traded in London rose, so did the risk of the city being engulfed by fire

made complacent Londoners wake up to the danger of fire and fix the problem – despite that being how the story has often been told. Rather, my study shows a major shift taking place in the nature of fires in the metropolis – from numerous small outbreaks to much larger blazes.”

The cause of this change, Garrioch suggests, is the city’s maritime trade. That’s because, as this industry grew, so too did the quantity of volatile products stored in buildings around London. By the 17th century, some of these would have been familiar – finely ground ‘sea coal’ from Newcastle, or brandy from France – while others, including tobacco and saltpetre, were more recent arrivals. London’s position as a hub for international trade also meant that many of these materials were frequently being moved around the city’s streets.

“Of course, London had always been a port, and ship-building itself required vast quantities of wood, flax and linen for sails, and pitch, tar and turpentine for water-proofing,” says Garrioch, whose research appears in *The Historical Journal*. “But since the early 1600s there had been an enormous growth in trade, and the quantities being

“Consumer industries and rising industrial demand led to a boom in all sorts of highly flammable products”

imported rose many times over. New consumer industries and rising industrial demand led to a boom in all sorts of highly flammable products.”

Many contemporary reports reveal the role of such materials in the large fires that took place from the 1630s onwards. Samuel Pepys, for instance, wrote of “oil cellars” that he witnessed burning long after the 1666 fire had destroyed houses in the same area.

Garrioch stresses that such materials alone did not spark the Great Fire, and that other factors also played their part. “Of course, lots of fires still started in the same old ways: overturned candles or clothes left to dry too close to a furnace pipe,” he says. “But when the flames spread to warehouses filled with highly flammable imported wares, they became almost unstoppable. It took a long time to find solutions, but they were innovative: new technologies and forms of firefighting, as well as political measures to change people’s uses of fire and of flammable materials.”

Garrioch’s research is part of a wider project into the history of city fires, which he suggests will tell us much about how people lived in urban environments. “All fires were created and made more or less dangerous by human activity: the spread of tobacco-smoking in the mid-17th century, for instance, or the rise of permanent public theatres,” he says. “By looking at a variety of cities – including London, Venice, Paris and Stockholm – I’m able to identify common elements, but also the differences between them.”

WHAT WE’VE LEARNED THIS MONTH

Tutankhamun’s tomb held a meteorite dagger

A dagger included in the tomb of Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun was made with iron from a meteorite, analysis suggests. Researchers studied the blade’s chemical makeup and found that its cobalt and nickel content “strongly suggests an extraterrestrial origin”. Comparison with known meteorites around the Red Sea coast of Egypt point to a possible match with one found 150 miles west of the city of Alexandria.

A huge monument has been revealed in Petra

A combination of drone technology, satellite imagery and ground surveys has uncovered a massive monument beneath the sand at Petra in Jordan. The structure includes an enormous platform, measuring 184 by 161 feet, as well as a smaller platform lined with columns and featuring a huge staircase. According to experts, pottery remnants discovered near the structure suggest that it may be more than 2,150 years old.

Britain’s oldest written record has been found

Excavations in the heart of the City of London have yielded a wealth of archaeological discoveries, including the oldest handwritten document ever found in Britain – a tablet dating from 8 January AD 57. Other tablets found in the dig include financial records and what could be the first evidence of Roman schooling yet found in the UK. Hundreds of the finds will go on display at the offices of media organisation Bloomberg, which will stand on the site.




A first-century AD writing tablet, discovered in central London

FOLLOW YOUR FAMILY HISTORY AROUND THE GLOBE



Our immigration & travel records reveal 200 years of history across the globe. Discover the journeys that shaped your family through our UK Passenger Lists - Incoming and Outgoing, plus millions of records from the USA, Australia and more.

 **ancestry.co.uk** WHO WILL YOU DISCOVER?



The historians' view...

Why has Britain decided to leave the EU?

On 23 June, Britain voted narrowly in favour of leaving the European Union. In the aftermath of this historic decision, we asked five historians to offer their opinions about the causes of the Leave victory and what it might mean for the country's future

COMPILED BY **ROB ATTAR**



A protest against the prospect of Brexit at Parliament Square on 25 June, two days after the referendum took place



David Cameron gives his final EU campaign speech, on 22 June. Two days later he announced his resignation

GETTY IMAGES/REX FEATURES



A group of Vote Leave supporters at a rally in Manchester in April prepare for a speech from Boris Johnson

THE PANEL

Richard Overy



is a professor of history at the University of Exeter who specialises in 20th-century international history, especially the Second World War.

Dominic Sandbrook



is a historian, writer and broadcaster who has presented a number of BBC TV series on postwar Britain, including a forthcoming history of the 1980s.

David Abulafia



is professor of Mediterranean history at Cambridge University. He is the leader of Historians for Britain, which argued for changes to Britain's EU membership.

Helen McCarthy



is a senior lecturer at Queen Mary University of London who works on modern Britain. She edits the journal *Twentieth Century British History*.

Kathleen Burk



is emeritus professor of modern and contemporary history at University College London. Her interests lie in British and Anglo-American history.

Were you surprised by the result, and if so, why?

Richard Overy: I was not surprised as the result was always a strong possibility given the long history of populist hostility to Europe and the difficulty of finding a popular political language in favour of a European future. The narrow margin was also entirely predictable.

Helen McCarthy: I was surprised because I believed the 'safety first' argument of the Remain side would resonate in the final days of the campaign and pull undecideds towards Remain. I underestimated the strength of anti-EU sentiment, even in relatively affluent parts of England, such as Essex, Suffolk and Surrey where many stand to lose a great deal in the recession which almost inevitably will follow Brexit. The result confounds the familiar logic of 'it's the economy, stupid' – which has fitted so neatly with the evidence of general elections in recent decades.

Do you see the Leave victory as more the result of short or long-term factors?

Dominic Sandbrook: Clearly it's a bit of both. It was close, after all. One very obvious short-term factor, for example, is the fact that Labour had such an extraordinarily unconvincing leader, which nobody anticipated even a year ago. But I also think this has been a long time coming. Public discontent about immigration has been growing for 50 years; so has the alienation of large swathes of formerly industrial working-class England. And I think it's crucial to remember that England has a very long history of distrust and even hostility towards its European neighbours. In a sense,

“Public discontent about immigration has been growing for 50 years; so has the alienation of swathes of formerly industrial working-class England

DOMINIC SANDBROOK

and though I'm sorry it happened, the nation's verdict on 23 June was simply a reversion to our default setting.

Kathleen Burk: In the long-term, Europe has frequently been an existential threat, from the French to the Germans to the Russians. During the Second World War, all other countries in continental Europe, except Sweden, Spain and Switzerland, had been invaded, conquered and occupied; Britain had not, and faith in the state was not shaken.

Then in the medium-term the widespread anger arising from the democratic deficit and the volume of regulations became increasingly intolerable. As for the short-term: social and economic chaos and the threat of a surge of migrants were alarming. The desirable policies of the EU, such as funding, were taken for granted, while the undesirable were all too public.

David Abulafia: It's a combination. The aggressive stance of the Remainers proved counter-productive – not that the Leave campaign always conducted itself wisely. The comments by Obama and others were also, I believe, counter-productive, not least because he won't even be president when the UK leaves the EU.

But we are also looking at the release of pent-up anger after so many years during which the public was not consulted about 'ever closer union' and 'the European project'. Jean-Claude Juncker bears heavy responsibility; his refusal to compromise or to introduce democratic reforms left the PM with insignificant concessions.

To what extent has Britain historically stood apart from continental Europe?

HM: Britain has been closely engaged in all the major events and turning points of 20th-century European history, from the two world wars and the creation and work of the League of Nations in between, to postwar reconstruction and, since the 1970s, the European project. Certainly Britain's historic relationship with Europe has distinctive features, but that's true of all member states to a greater or lesser degree.

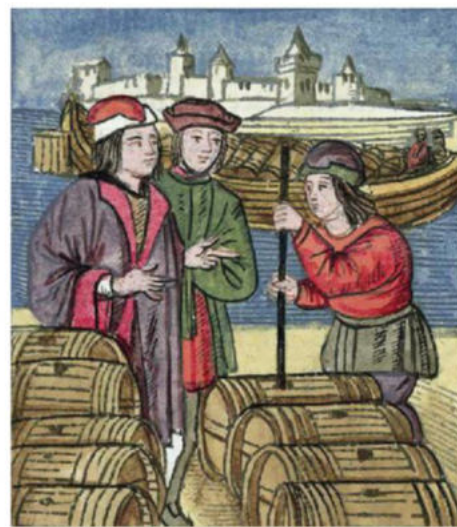
I dislike arguments about how the English Channel, or victory in the Second World War, or the 'special relationship' with the US somehow makes it impossible for the British to feel truly European. Historians should use



narratives to unpick complex processes of change and continuity in the past, not to shackle politics in the present and the future.

DS: Any historian will tell you that we have a long history of entanglement with the continent: the Angevin empire, the Glorious Revolution, and so on. Yes, yes, we know all that. But the plain fact is that Britain has a long-standing self-image as an exceptional country, a cradle of Protestant liberty. Is that just a myth? Maybe. But myths matter.

Perhaps even more importantly, we undoubtedly had an exceptional 20th century. Britain was the *only* major European country not to experience defeat,



A 16th-century picture illustrating French wine traders. Britain's economic links with Europe have come under scrutiny

BRIDGEMAN



This 1783 James Gillray cartoon depicts England being mocked by other European powers, France, Spain and Holland, for having lost America

invasion, occupation, civil war or dictatorship. That meant that we had a unique attitude to the European project. Alone among the major European nations, we entered grudgingly and halfheartedly. Our neighbours hoped to escape their modern history. But many British voters saw no reason to join in the first place, because they had so few of those 20th-century scars.

RO: Britain has never stood apart from Europe and it is an illusion to believe that it ever has. Britain (earlier England) has always been a part of the European order and has waged war and made trade in Europe continuously. Influences – cultural, economic, technological, intellectual – have flowed both ways for centuries.

How far do you see the EU itself as having been responsible for Euroscepticism in Britain over the years?

KB: Europe and the UK are different. They have different legal systems, different business cycles, different approaches to languages, different political cultures, different assumptions about the state. The foundation for Euroscepticism was there, providing a strong base for an increasing dislike of unacceptable interference by unelected institutions.

DA: Very much so: the remote institutions of the EU, largely unaccountable, have generated Euroscepticism not just in the UK. The insistence on creating a 'European identity', based on a false notion that being European

transcends national identities, has created an enormous backlash that has taken unpleasant forms, as in Hungary or France.

The British public, with its milder political temper, has by and large avoided extremist positions, but the EU is now paying the price of its extraordinary arrogance, combined with impenetrable bureaucracy and corruption. Moreover, the European Court has stamped on national parliaments and supreme courts.

RO: It is not the EU as such that has been responsible for Euroscepticism (a phenomenon by no means exclusively British) but the failure of national governments to make clear enough the nature of the union and the benefits derived from it, or to counter popular but ill-informed prejudice about the Union's practices.

Why do you think the result this time was so different from the Remain victory of 1975?

KB: Forty years versus two years of experience.

DA: Joining a loose trading association was one thing; being part of an increasingly monolithic United States of Europe would be quite another, and the concessions won by the prime minister simply did not go far enough to meet the worries of the British public. Had he managed to position the UK within a new Europe built around the old idea of a common market, he would have won the support of the vast majority of voters.

DS: The answer's very simple. Britain was at a low ebb in 1975, its confidence shattered

after 10 years of terrible news. The empire had gone, the pound had been devalued; there had been five states of emergency in four years. Inflation was heading towards 30 per cent, and all the talk was of Britain being ungovernable. So Europe seemed a way out, a bulwark, even a panacea.

If we had been better off in 1975, though – if we had been a more united, confident, prosperous country – I suspect the vote would have gone differently. So perhaps it is only a slight stretch to suggest that Britain was always likely to reverse the 1975 referendum once it recovered its self-confidence.

How much do you think an awareness of history played a role in people's voting decisions?

HM: Some older voters seem to have been influenced by what might be described as a 'myth of betrayal' surrounding the 1975 referendum. In other words, they believed that they had been misled by elites promising access to a single market rather than membership of a nascent European 'super-state', and this second referendum presented an opportunity to settle scores.

Some Leave voters also appeared to subscribe to a politics of patriotism rooted in a rather generalised but nonetheless historic notion of their nation's 'greatness'. This created fertile ground for Leave's claim that the UK would thrive outside the EU, but barren soil for Remain's more nuanced arguments about the merits of pooled sovereignty in an interdependent world.

DA: For some people, I don't doubt, there was some romantic notion of recovering an Olde England characterised by village cricket greens and so on, but I don't think it counted for much. The debate was about the future, which is uncertain, to put it mildly. The recent history of the EU – stagnant growth, a disastrous common currency, the Schengen crisis – was surely in some people's minds, but it was strangely ignored in favour of vapid speculation about what 'might' or 'could' happen to the economy, security and so on.

RO: It is difficult to gauge this, and historians would like to think it did. It mattered less for the Remain camp, though there was some sense that union was a better

“Some Leave voters appeared to subscribe to a politics of patriotism rooted in a rather generalised but historic notion of their nation's 'greatness'”

HELEN MCCARTHY

future given Europe's bloody past. It mattered more for the Leave campaign because it traded on the myths of 1940 and Britain alone against the European threat. This was, of course, a complete distortion. Alone, Britain had no prospect of winning the war. Moreover the war itself had been about saving Europe from fascism, a commitment that tied Britain more to Europe, rather than less.

KB: I cannot think that an awareness of history played much of a part: not even the Remain camp pointed out that the EU in its early guises was set up partly to balance and constrain Germany, bringing to an end 75 years of European civil war.

DS: History undoubtedly mattered a great deal. Not, curiously, the kind of history written by historians, but a version of history that's very deeply embedded in the popular imagination – the island nation, standing alone against a succession of continental bullies. In many ways it's a myth. But through our popular culture, as much as anything, it's so tightly woven into many Britons' sense of themselves that there's probably nothing historians can do to shift it. People can write as many books as they like about our European inheritance or the 'invention' of our national identity, but you just can't change a nation's character and assumptions overnight.

How does this referendum fit into the history of British democracy?

HM: Direct democracy in the form of referenda has not featured prominently in Britain's modern political history. To the contrary, popular plebiscites were generally

“This could be very much to Britain's advantage. We have the chance to make connections across the globe that the EU has failed to pursue

DAVID ABULAFIA



Trafalgar Square is decked in flags as part of Second World War victory celebrations, 1945. The war has figured in the recent debate

regarded as the mark of immature polities not yet sufficiently advanced to practise the art of representative democracy – of which the British were the supposed masters.

Of course there is much Whiggish nonsense in this; arguably what this referendum has exposed is the lamentable state of political leadership in this country, which utterly failed to convey to voters the magnitude of what was at stake in a ballot of this kind. We're witnessing the fallout of this failure in the regret subsequently expressed by many Leave supporters who didn't think their vote 'would count'.

DS: In democratic terms, there's never been anything like it. Personally I think it was the worst campaign in our history, with both sides reaching a terrible low. What's also true is that the electorate have probably never rebelled so overtly (if narrowly) against the massed ranks of the political and economic establishments. I don't even think the Labour landslide of 1945 comes close. But the referendum also represents something that few of us have really come to terms with – the eclipse of the idea of representative parliamentary democracy by a kind of populist plebiscitary version.

Has a Leave vote shifted Britain's historical trajectory?

KB: The Leave vote appears to have shifted Britain's historical trajectory back to that of 1970: 1971–2016 appears to have been an aberration.

DA: It means we won't be in at the kill when the EU disintegrates. Unless its leaders take

the British vote seriously, recognising the strength of Euroscepticism across the Union, the EU is doomed. In the very long term, though, leaving the EU may well position the UK between the EU and the rest of the world, very much to Britain's advantage as a trading nation. We have the chance to make connections across the globe that the EU has failed to pursue. So this is an opportunity that has to be seized enthusiastically.

DS: I think this is the biggest turning point in our modern political history. Not everyone will agree, but I don't think the elections of 1945 and 1979 were turning points; I think the changes they unleashed were always coming. But this is different, a real lurch into the unknown. Half a century after Harold Macmillan made our first bid to join, Britain seems to have definitively turned its back on the European project. Never before has our political future been so utterly unpredictable, and never before has our national destiny seemed so uncertain.

HM: While some Leave supporters might welcome Brexit as a return to glorious isolation, in truth it marks a fundamental break with the liberal internationalist traditions present within British foreign policy throughout the century. Britain was a major architect of the League of Nations and a founding member of the United Nations, and, despite waning levels of enthusiasm on the part of postwar British governments, has found in Europe a welcome source of global influence to compensate for the loss of its own superpower status.

In 50 years' time, how will historians look back on this result?

RO: Historians will have many explanations for the outcome of the referendum, and a clear view of its consequences, which we lack. It is impossible to pre-judge, since historians are themselves deeply divided now over the issue. In 50 years' time they are not likely to be less so.

HM: Assuming Brexit actually takes place, historians will look back at the EU referendum of 2016 as the moment when Britain slipped from managed into unmanaged decline in terms of her global influence and economic muscle. Even – or perhaps especially – if parliament finds a



Conservative leader Margaret Thatcher campaigns to stay in the EEC prior to the 1975 referendum, which resulted in a 67 per cent victory for Remain

way to prevent it, the referendum will mark one of the ugliest and most divisive chapters in the history of British democracy. Unless the Labour party finds a way to renew itself, historians might be talking about 2016 as the year in which a fundamental realignment took place in British politics favouring the far right. I sincerely hope I've got that one wrong.

KB: I suspect that it will be looked back on as a dirty, dishonest, history-changing episode. Very few of the leading lights will have come out of it well.

DS: It's genuinely impossible to say because it depends so completely on what happens next. That's what makes it so uncertain, and at once so exciting and so terrifying. We just have no way of knowing what Britain's future relationship with the EU will look like, or even what the economic impact will be. We don't even know whether Britain will exist as a political unit. Sadly, I think there's a good chance now that it won't, and that historians will look back on 23 June as the day that the United Kingdom died.

DA: As another stage in the disintegration of the EU, coming on top of the failure of the Euro project and the mishandling of the very real refugee crisis. From that perspective, it is more a sharp tremor than an earthquake – one of a series of tremors whose effect will be cumulative. Even if we had voted the other way, disintegration would still be on the cards, though not quite so rapidly.

“Cameron is likely to have joined Chamberlain in the hall of those politicians whose careers ended in a huge and incontrovertible failure

KATHLEEN BURK

And how will history remember David Cameron as prime minister?

RO: He might well have been remembered as a reasonably successful premier, given the major problems the country has faced. But it seems inevitable that history will see him as the man who failed to stop the wave of populist revolt in Britain over Europe, and who may well have opened the way for the rest of the European right to follow suit.

HM: As Lord North is remembered for losing America, Cameron will take his place in the history books as the premier who unwittingly led us out of Europe and, in all likelihood, ensured the secession of Scotland from the UK. It's hard to recall any notable achievements, except perhaps the legalisation of gay marriage, which come anywhere near mitigating Cameron's car-crash decision to call a wholly unnecessary referendum.

DA: David Cameron has been a very capable politician, and at the peak of his career won considerable popularity. This was his big mistake politically – he didn't expect to have to hold a referendum, because he didn't expect his party to win enough seats to govern on its own. Then he miscalculated by not standing above the fray but throwing himself into bitter arguments that (on both sides) sometimes stretched the evidence and reason. So something of a tragic figure: a charismatic leader who gambled and lost.

KB: He is likely to have joined Neville Chamberlain in the hall of those politicians whose political careers ended in a huge and incontrovertible failure of a policy of national and international importance. A lack of judgment, a lack of familiarity with the wider electorate and a focus on tactics rather than strategy did for him.

DS: I think that until 23 June, Cameron was a good, solid, moderate prime minister. Certainly he handled the economy far better than most people predicted. But even I have to face facts. Nobody is going to remember him for anything but the referendum. I'm genuinely sorry to say this, but in the space of a few hours Cameron plunged from a well-deserved place in the top half of the prime ministerial league table to an equally well-deserved one in the relegation zone. He joins Chamberlain, Eden and Callaghan as men remembered, perhaps unjustly, for just one word. In his case, not 'appeasement', 'Suez' or 'strikes', but 'Europe'. ■

LETTERS

Barbarossa: Germany's step too far

LETTER OF THE MONTH

In his interview about Operation Barbarossa (*Hitler's Greatest Mistake*, June), Antony Beevor rightly sees Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union as "Hitler's greatest mistake". My great uncle August Wilhelm would have agreed. He was a reserve officer in the Wehrmacht. A family tale has it that news of Hitler's invasion plans caused downright anger. August Wilhelm would nervously walk up and down the living room, uttering that "now Hitler has gone one step too far", and that this would lead to Germany's downfall.

Yet August Wilhelm's ill-guided sense of honour made him obey his military oath. He was called up and killed in the campaign. Even for contemporaries, no

superior intelligence was necessary to see that Operation Barbarossa was doomed to failure. Antony Beevor admirably dissects its faults and follies. The postwar German army replaced the principle of 'unconditional obedience' with that of the soldier as a responsible 'citizen in uniform'.

Dr Stefan Manz, Birmingham

● We reward the letter of the month writer with our 'History Choice' book of the month. This issue it is *Britain's Europe: A Thousand Years of Conflict and Cooperation* by Brendan Simms. Read the review on page 69



Hitler's memory lapse

Surely Hitler only made one mistake in the whole of his life: he believed the idiot who said "The British are cowards and will not fight". If he had remembered his experience in the trenches in the First World War he would not have believed them and would not have invaded Poland.

Anthony Loxton, Norwich

Salute to self-publishing

I have just finished reading your 200th issue from cover to cover and I'm pleased to say it is as controversial and informative as ever. To add to the controversy, I wish to take issue with your *Books Interview* and Andrew Roberts' comments about self-published books. Without the aid of famous or affluent parents, I have written a book about my passion: 17th-century history and, specifically, women's history. After 20 years' research, and living in the 17th century as a re-enactor, my book, *The Women of the English Civil War*, is selling well in bookshops and on Amazon.

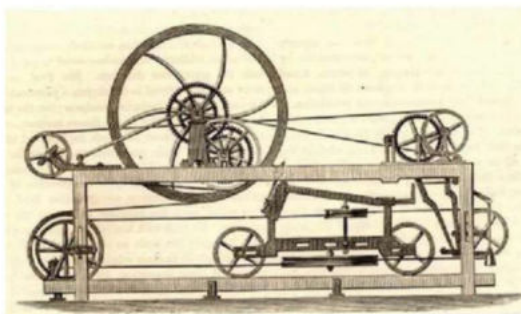
I realise Andrew Roberts dislikes self-publishing, but if I hadn't written this book, the history of these women's unrewarded bravery and suffering would remain untold. Hidden away for 400 years, their voices would have been

largely lost. So I decided to speak for them. I now work in the heritage industry and realised that the only thing the general public thought they knew about women in the English Civil War was that they were whores and baggage, so it was time to redress the issue.

Margaret Cooper Evans, Oxfordshire

Cotton on to Crompton

I found your article *The Power of Cotton* (July) very informative. I wonder, when reading about the industrial revolution, why Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the Spinning Mule, is often left out of the history. His invention at Hall i' th' Wood, Bolton in 1779 changed the lives and livelihoods of millions of people throughout the world. It allowed the



The Spinning Mule (1779) brought huge prosperity, but not to its inventor Samuel Crompton

spinning industry to move from a domestic to a factory-based status within two decades and furthered the introduction of other inventions. He was, however, a stubborn genius, difficult at social exchanges and consequently a hopeless businessman. This allowed others to take advantage by making colossal financial gains through his invention.

He died a pauper, though his invention effected the greatest advancement in textile history and generated enormous wealth for some, on a scale never seen before. He left behind a legacy to the ordinary people of this country, so let us give this much-neglected genius a place in history that he truly deserves.

Donna Hughes, Bolton

Not just the navy

I enjoyed the *History's Big Questions* feature in June's edition. I would, however, challenge Sam Willis's assertion that "America is independent because our ships and naval strategy and naval command were inadequate between 1777 and 1782".

Although a considerable factor, the statement restricts the enduring success of the 13 colonies to British naval failure. I would suggest that the land campaign and the limitations on command and control played an equal if not greater factor in the British failure. The battles of Cowpens and King's Mountain robbed Cornwallis of significant skilled manpower from the British legion and Ferguson riflemen. The diminution of these elite forces without a doubt led to failure in the southern campaign and the ultimate defeat at Yorktown.

I would also like to ask: if Britain did not 'rule the waves', who was her better?

Richard Walters, Gloucester

Missed from the list

It saddens me that no Britons of African descent can be found in the 2016 *History Hot 100* (July). Mary Seacole and Walter Tull should be there. Dr Harold Moody and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor probably would be there if their achievements were more widely acknowledged. Part of the problem lies with the British school curriculum ignoring black Britons from



Dr Harold Moody, Walter Tull, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Mary Seacole – all unjustly overlooked in British history education, says reader Stephen Bourne

history. Consequently it is hardly surprising to discover that, in our universities, there is a dearth of undergraduates of African and Caribbean heritage studying history. It is one of the least popular subjects for black British students at undergraduate level.

Stephen Bourne, London

Intolerant Elizabeth

In the June issue, a tweeter nominated Elizabeth I as their favourite historical character (*Letters*), one of the reasons being her “religious tolerance”. Elizabeth I can be commended for many qualities, but surely not religious toleration! We did not achieve this until the 19th century. Many men and women were persecuted (some to death) during her reign, both Catholics and Protestants. To regard Elizabeth as tolerant is the same as considering her father Henry VIII to be ‘good King Hal’.

Susan Martin, Walsall

Alexander not so great

I was stunned to read in “What you’ve been saying...” in the June edition (*Letters*) words praising Alexander the Great as a leader who “disseminated culture and civilisation instead of destroying them”. Since the 1970s, Persian studies have radically changed the way in which the period of Achaemenid rule, which Alexander brought to an end, is understood. In bringing Hellenism to ‘the barbarians’, as the Greeks called the Persians, Alexander crushed a culture that was far richer and more diverse than that of the militaristic, squabbling and women-hating Greeks. The standard view of Alexander’s campaigns, a result

of Greek and Roman authors shaping events for their own ends, is given the lie by this increasingly rich field of study.

As to the people ‘loving’ him, come the end even his loyal soldiers opposed his plans to centre rule of the empire from Persia and not Macedonia. The history of Alexander has been too long mythology and too little history. In many ways, he was no more than a tactically brilliant and very successful gang leader, like his hero, Homer’s Achilles.

Dr Christopher Bryant, London

Corrections

● The opening image of *Jutland: The Battle that Won the War* (May) was incorrectly captioned as “The 1st German Armoured Cruiser Squadron”. The ships shown were actually the 1st Scouting Group. Thanks to Wayne Long for spotting this.

● In the review of Roger Moorhouse’s book *The Devils’ Alliance* (March), we wrote: “Stalinist USSR certainly had many ‘victims’.” The word victims was enclosed in quote marks and not inverted commas, but the way the review was edited meant this was not clear. It was certainly not our intention to downplay the victims of Stalinism. Thanks to Hugo Kondratiuk for pointing this out.

WRITE TO US

We welcome your letters, while reserving the right to edit them. We may publish your letters on our website. Please include a daytime phone number and, if emailing, a postal address (not for publication). Letters should be no longer than 250 words.

email: letters@historyextra.com

Post: Letters, BBC History Magazine, Immediate Media Company Bristol Ltd, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN

SOCIAL MEDIA

What you’ve been saying on Twitter and Facebook



@HistoryExtra: Should *Game of Thrones* be used as a way into medieval history?

Kelly-Jo Carter I don’t think anyone seriously sees GoT as anything but fantasy. No one is watching for a history lesson. But I can see the interest in making comparisons with historical figures or events. And if this type of ‘dumbing down’ leads to a genuine interest in history, where’s the harm in that? Intellectual snobbery is never a good thing

@RuthInHeritage Yes. We have to make history relevant to the audience – why not use every ‘in’ we have?

@sararosedavis No. While GoT is entertaining, there is no historical backing to the series, period. It cannot be used in lieu of medieval history

Josh Baker-Cox I don’t think there’s any harm in making comparisons and picking up on any of the more accurate (or inaccurate) portrayals of medieval life in a fantasy setting. But how many people truly sit watching GoT and think “my, so this is what was happening in the 15th century”? It’s a fantasy world and should probably just be treated as such

Jessica Jones I love history in all forms and hate seeing it dumbed down. I watch GoT for entertainment, not history

@greg_jenner Any pop culture which helps people to think historically should be welcomed

@HistoryExtra: Which is your favourite historical site and why?

Christopher Corbett-Fiacco Without a doubt, ever since I first saw it in childhood – Stonehenge! Its simplicity and grandeur – giant carved slabs of rock standing upright in the grass – and the mystery of it: who built it, what is it really, and how was it constructed there?

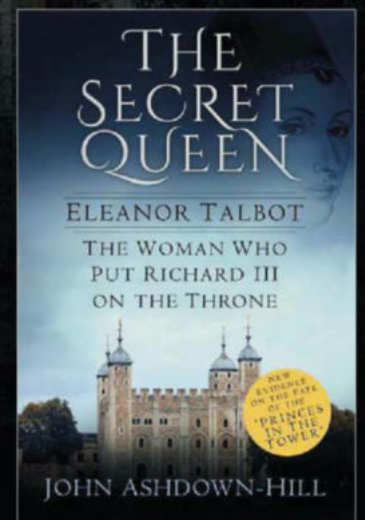
@wa7trel Dover Castle. It has so much history and you simply can’t see everything in one visit – you have to go back

Matthew Noonan The Parthenon in Athens, as it attested to the intellectual and aesthetic greatness of Athens during its Golden Age. It occupies a privileged place in Greek architectural history

A 500-YEAR-OLD MYSTERY...
NEW EVIDENCE REVEALED...
**WHOSE BONES WERE
IN THE TOWER?**



Richard III historian John Ashdown-Hill reveals astonishing new evidence in his updated book *The Secret Queen*. In researching Eleanor Talbot, the woman who put Richard III on the throne, significant new information is uncovered which throws the identity of the bones found at the Tower of London into doubt.



The
History
Press

The destination for history
www.thehistorypress.co.uk

Available from all good bookshops



Michael Wood on... **a great Muslim poet**

“The Islam of Rumi was fired by humanity and compassion”

“So Hollywood is to make a film on the life of the 13th-century Muslim mystic and poet Rumi, a man still commemorated every December with fabulous energy and colour by the ‘whirling dervishes’ at his tomb at Konya in Turkey. The film will be scripted by *Gladiator* screen-writer David Franzoni, and already there has been talk of Leonardo di Caprio as Rumi and Robert Downey Jr as Shams al Tabriz, the mysterious holy man who inspired Rumi’s gospel of love which is now so popular with new agers in the west. One goal, Franzoni says, is to break the stereotypical portrayal of Muslims in the movies. It will be intriguing, to say the least.

Rumi’s life opens up vistas of one of the most violent and yet creative epochs in history. He was born in 1207, possibly in a small town on the Vakhsh river, beyond the Oxus in Tajikistan. The central Asian Silk Road then was a fantastic meeting place of cultures and ideas. It may be difficult for us to imagine now, but before modern national boundaries, Soviet rule and climate change, this was a fertile, populous region with great urban centres and a rich transnational culture in Persian and Arabic.

But all that was to change. In Rumi’s childhood, Mongol armies swept into central Asia and the near east, and his family joined a flood of refugees fleeing through Afghanistan, to Damascus and Aleppo and finally into Turkey (their wanderings echoing today’s migrant crisis in Syria).

The values of civilisation and traditional religion were turned upside down: it would be the end of the golden age of Arabic Islamic culture. Violence was the story of Rumi’s day, as it is of ours.

Rumi trained as a traditional Muslim scholar and preacher, though with a strong attraction to the Islamic mystical traditions of Sufism. Then in 1244 he met the charismatic wandering mystic Shams of Tabriz who had sworn a vow of poverty. For four years the two were inseparable, as close as lovers – such intense male friendship is found in medieval Europe too. Then one

night Shams disappeared. Rumi went on the road to find him, but he was never seen again; some said he was murdered by jealous disciples, even by a son of Rumi. Perhaps though he simply chose to go.

Rumi sought his friend as far as Damascus where he had a famous revelation: “Why am I seeking? I am the same as him. His essence speaks through me. I have been looking for myself!”

Devastated by his loss Rumi gave vent to his feelings with a great outpouring of love poetry: to Shams, to the Prophet, and to God; poems to rival Dante and Shakespeare, at the centre of which is the huge spiritual epic *Masnavi*, often called the Persian Qur’an. Rumi is still loved by many in the Iranian spiritual universe, and today he is the most popular poet in the US.

It is worth asking why. Sufism is the mystical current in Islam. It arose early in Muslim history, in part out of the poetic and mystical language of the Qur’an itself. But orthodox Sunni teaching says that there is a unique truth and that everything else is false. Alternative forms of religious discourse are therefore wrong, or unnecessary. Sufism rejects this strict interpretation. It says the orthodoxy doesn’t represent the whole truth of existence, or the inner truth that is reached by personal love and inner vision. The tension between those views lies at the heart of Islam still today.

Rumi believed in music, poetry and song, the very things condemned as ‘acts of the devil’ by hardliners today. In his ideas about other religions, he resembles Ibn Arabi (about whom I spoke in my Christmas column): “In love, brothers and strangers are united... in that faith Muslims and non believers are one...”

So it’s a fascinating time to tell Rumi’s story. For, just like *Gladiator*, with its meditations on the values of the Roman Republic at the start of the Bush presidency, this will also be a film about our own times. Let us hope then that through it the other Islam, the Islam of Rumi, with its message of humanity and compassion, may find a still wider audience. ■

Michael Wood

is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. His latest BBC TV series was *The Story of China*. He is preparing a film on humanity’s oldest stories




Holidays with Hitler

The Nazis seduced as well as terrorised the German people into buying into the National Socialist ethos, says **Roger Moorhouse**. And one of the ways in which they did so was by offering workers cheap holidays in the sun

All in it together

Guests on the *Wilhelm Gustloff* in c1939. Besides providing an affordable holiday, a cruise on this egalitarian liner was an expression of *Volksgemeinschaft*, the idea that all Germans were members of a 'national community' transcending their class or regional divisions



f the name of the Nazi cruise liner *Wilhelm Gustloff* registers a flicker of recognition with readers, it will most probably be because of the grim circumstances of the vessel's demise during the Second World War.

Torpedoed by a Soviet submarine on 30 January 1945, the ship sank into the icy waters of the eastern Baltic within an hour. Of the estimated 10,000 refugees and wounded crammed aboard, barely 1,200 would survive the night.

It is in this guise then, as modern history's deadliest maritime disaster, that the story of the *Wilhelm Gustloff* – if it is known at all – is remembered. Alongside a few history books, the drama of her sinking has spawned a film and a couple of German TV dramas. It also featured prominently in one of Günter Grass's later novels, *Crabwalk* (2002). Yet, there is much else in the story of the *Wilhelm Gustloff* that is of interest, not least its origins as the Third Reich's most famous cruise liner.

Launched in May 1937, from the slipway at Blohm and Voss in Hamburg, the *Wilhelm Gustloff* (named after the founder of the Swiss Nazi party, who was assassinated in 1936) was state of the art. Weighing in at more than 25,000 tonnes, and measuring more than 200 metres from stem to stern, she was larger and considerably heavier than Hitler's so-called 'pocket battleships', the *Deutschland*, the *Admiral Scheer* and the *Graf Spee*.

In line with the 'national socialist' ethos of the regime, the *Gustloff* was described as a 'classless' ship. Her 616 cabins – spread over four decks and able to accommodate more than 1,400 passengers – were all constructed to two basic patterns, two or four-berth, and all had a sea view, with toilet facilities shared. In addition, her seven bars, two restaurants, two dance halls, concert hall, library, hairdressing salon and swimming pool were all accessible to all passengers. As the Nazi minister Robert Ley boasted at her launch: "We Germans do not use any old crate for our

working men and women. Only the best is good enough.”

So, what, one might ask, was Nazi Germany doing building cruise ships for its working men and women? It is a good question. Our usual assumption about the Third Reich is that it functioned primarily on fear: fear of the Gestapo, fear of the concentration camps, fear of stepping out of line. While this is not entirely inaccurate, it does rather obscure the fact that Nazi Germany was as much a state built on seduction as on threats.

An essential part of that seduction was provided by the Nazi leisure organisation that had commissioned the *Wilhelm Gustloff* – the improbably named Kraft durch Freude, or Strength Through Joy, usually shortened to KdF. Established in 1933 as a subdivision of the German Labour Front, the KdF had a simple premise: state-organised leisure. Just as Nazism sought to woo the ordinary German worker away from socialism towards ‘National Socialism’, so the KdF promised holidays, cultural enrichment and sporting activities as part of the appeal. In essence, it was offering cruises and concerts in place of collective bargaining and class struggle.

The pulse of blood

It was not an entirely cynical exercise. Indeed, it was an expression of the socialist impulse that had been part of the Nazi ethos since the party’s foundation, and which, though diluted in the years that followed, had never been extinguished entirely. It came to be expressed via the concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the idea that all Germans were members of a ‘national community’ that transcended class or regional divides. As KdF officials proclaimed in 1933, the organisation was to serve as a “cultural tutor”, teaching all Germans – whether Bavarians or Frisians, East Prussians or Württembergers – to become part of the nation, to “feel the pulse of their own blood”.

The KdF and the *Volksgemeinschaft* were not afterthoughts or simply eyewash to seduce the gullible; they were an integral part of Nazi Germany’s vision for its new society. Every German worker was encouraged to become a member, and by 1939 around 25 million of them had signed up. Each paid a 50-pfennig monthly subscription, which entitled them to apply for tickets to subsidised sporting and cultural events, such as theatre showings, concerts, chess tournaments, weekend rambles or swimming lessons. It was no sideshow. In 1937, the year the *Wilhelm Gustloff* was launched, the KdF staged more than 600,000 cultural and sporting events across Germany, which were attended by nearly 50 million participants. By 1939, the last year in which the organisation was fully operative, those figures had almost doubled.

“Marxism only talks about it, but National Socialism delivers the worker’s dearest wish: a carefree holiday in which to laze to your heart’s content”

Aside from weekend and evening activities, the KdF also expanded into providing holidays for German workers. It had been one of its key commitments to provide an annual holiday for every German worker, and it was seriously meant: holiday provision quickly accounted for a fifth of the organisation’s total expenditure. In one of the first of such excursions, a thousand Berlin workers were sent on a chartered train to Bavaria in February 1934.

In the five years to 1939, the KdF organised around 7 million holidays, potentially encompassing one in 10 of the German population. Such trips, predominantly within Germany itself, were for the first time made affordable for ordinary working-class Germans, many of whom had never been ‘on holiday’ before. They could be paid for piecemeal by purchasing stamps in a savings book and were heavily subsidised.

It was in this spirit that the vast resort complex at Prora on the Baltic island of Rügen was conceived – as a place where all Germans would mix and mingle and enjoy the bracing sea air – and all for the bargain price of 18 Reichsmarks (RM, the currency in Germany from 1924–48) per week.

Though the outbreak of war meant it would never receive any holidaymakers, Prora’s huge 3 mile building was constructed to house 20,000 at a time and was to serve as a showpiece of the ‘New Germany’. It was planned to be one of four such resorts.

The same logic applied to the construction of the KdF fleet, including the *Wilhelm Gustloff*: that of providing the ordinary German worker with the possibility of enjoying a sea-cruise, something that had previously only been available to the very wealthy. In 1937, the year that the *Gustloff* was being fitted out and was yet to enter service, the KdF fleet of nine vessels made 146 cruises, carrying more than 130,000 passengers to destinations from the Baltic Sea to Madeira.

Costs, subsidised of course, were affordable, with 59 RM charged for a five-day tour of the Norwegian fjords and 63 RM for a week in the Mediterranean, rising to 150 RM for a 12-day tour around Italy and 155 RM for a two-week voyage to Lisbon and Madeira. With average weekly wages at around 30 RM

per week, it is easy to see the enormous popular appeal that such trips had.

Naturally, there was a catch. Indoctrination and propaganda were never far from the surface on a KdF cruise. The tour leader doubled as a Nazi propagandist, imparting political messages with the daily briefing. Destinations, too, were carefully chosen, including either ‘friendly’ countries, such as Spain or Italy, or those such as Libya and Morocco that wouldn’t dent Germany’s sense of Aryan superiority. Even the ship’s tannoy would be harnessed to broadcast patriotic music or speeches by party grandees. For those people who resisted such blandishments, each cruise carried aboard it a small team of plain clothes Gestapo men to report on any ‘misdeemeanours’.

They needn’t have worried. Aside from perennial concerns about the ‘gentrification’ of what were supposed to be cruises for German workers – the prevalence of the middle and upper classes among the *Gustloff*’s passengers – the KdF fleet was a huge success. Demand swiftly outstripped supply, and a sister ship to the *Gustloff*, the *Robert Ley*, entered service in 1939 shortly before the clouds of war gathered again over Europe.

In late August of that year, the *Wilhelm Gustloff* was briefly intercepted by a Royal Navy destroyer on her return from the Norwegian fjords, a sign of the heightened tensions. A few days later, she was redesignated as a hospital ship and confined to port. Her cruising days were over. According to the KdF’s own statistics, more than 75,000 passengers had sailed on her, one in 10 of the organisation’s total. One might surmise that the German people had been suitably seduced.

Brutally political

Of course, the logic behind the KdF’s activities – whether on land, or on the high seas – was never altruistic. It was brutally political. Aside from embodying the totalitarian desire to infiltrate and control every aspect of the individual’s life, the KdF’s offerings were also a crude bid for the workers’ allegiance, an attempt to undermine their traditional loyalty to socialism.

A propaganda picture from 1938 summed up the approach. Beneath an image of flat-capped workers relaxing in the sunshine on the deck of the *Gustloff*, the caption read: “Marxism only talks about it, but National Socialism delivers the worker’s dearest wish: a carefree annual holiday in which to laze to your heart’s content.”

Beyond this, there was also an important economic rationale – that of maximising production by fostering a contented and, above all, motivated workforce. “We do not send our workers to holiday on cruise ships,

The *Wilhelm Gustloff*, shown in 1938, was one of a fleet used to run subsidised cruises as part of the Third Reich's commitment to provide a holiday for every German worker



or build them enormous seaside resorts just for the sake of it," one KdF report explained. "We do it only to maintain and strengthen the labour potential of the individual, and to allow him to return to his workplace with renewed focus."

Hitler's attitude towards the KdF was more cynical still. As he made clear to one of his ministers in 1934, an important motive behind the programme was to ensure German workers were tempered, militarised, ready for any eventuality – even war.

"Make sure for me," he said, "that the people hold their nerve, for only with a people with strong nerves can we pursue politics." 'Pursuing politics' was one of Hitler's favourite euphemisms.

The *Wilhelm Gustloff* was never just another cruise liner; she was always a symbol. Most obviously perhaps, her sinking in 1945 – on the very day that Hitler had risen to power, 12 years earlier – was highly symbolic, a microcosm of the bloody demise that would soon engulf Germany. Despite being the deadliest maritime disaster in modern history, her 9,000-odd dead hardly registered in the slaughter of the final months of the Second World War.

Yet, there is another, rather more profound, symbolism at play. With our focus fixed on the overarching narrative of Nazi persecution and genocide, we forget that, for a generation of Germans, the *Wilhelm Gustloff* was a symbol of the bright shining future that the Third Reich appeared to be offering them – a world of opportunity, community and modernity. She was an essential part of Nazism's seductive appeal and a vital reminder to later generations that Nazi Germany did not live on threats alone. ■

Roger Moorhouse is the author of several books on modern German history, including *Berlin at War* (Vintage, 2011). He will be taking part in the Historical Trips debate during *BBC History Magazine's* History Weekend in Winchester – see historyweekend.com

DISCOVER MORE

BOOK

► **Ship of Fate: The Story of the MV Wilhelm Gustloff** by Roger Moorhouse (Endeavour Press, 2016, e-book available via Amazon)



ABOVE: One of the dining halls on *Wilhelm Gustloff* during its maiden voyage. Facilities also included seven bars, two dance halls, a concert hall, library and hair-dressing salon

ABOVE: "Kraft durch Freude" (KdF, or Strength Through Joy) reads this c1938 propaganda poster advertising Hitler's holiday scheme for German people

BELOW: The indoor swimming pool on *Gustloff's* sister ship, the KdF vessel *Robert Ley*, pictured in 1939



Holidaymakers at Berlin's Tempelhof airport heading off to Upper Bavaria on a KdF skiing holiday in c1935





Led into captivity?

This wall painting in the chapel of Sainte-Radegonde at Chinon has often been interpreted as showing Eleanor of Aquitaine with Henry II, perhaps at the moment he led her into captivity in 1174. In fact, it is more likely to show a scene from the life of Saint Radegonde – though the artist may have had Eleanor and Henry in mind when he painted it

Henry II and Richard I are among England's most celebrated kings. But when it came to resourcefulness, political nous and **sheer staying power**, neither were the equal of the woman that bound them, **Eleanor of Aquitaine**

by **Lindy Grant**

When Richard the Lionheart inherited his father's realms in 1189, one of his first acts as king was to release his mother,

Eleanor of Aquitaine, from imprisonment.

But Richard did a lot more than just free Eleanor from the house arrest under which she had languished for 15 years: he entrusted her with the governance of England while he secured his continental realms. And so the newly liberated queen-mother was soon progressing around the kingdom with a 'regal' court, judging cases and organising the release of prisoners – a traditional demonstration of magnanimity by a new ruler.

The contrast between Richard and his immediate predecessor as king couldn't have

been more stark. For it was Henry II, Richard's father, who had imprisoned Eleanor, as a punishment for supporting their sons' first rebellion against him.

While Henry locked Eleanor up, Richard gave her responsibility for his most prestigious territory at the delicate moment of the succession. So who *was* this woman who could inspire such faith, and such fear, in two of the most formidable men to wear the English crown?

Great affairs of state

Eleanor of Aquitaine lived an extraordinarily long, colourful and controversial life – one, to modern eyes at least, that has earned her a seat at medieval Europe's top table. Her prominence can, to a large extent, be traced to her choice of husbands. She was married to two kings – Louis VII of France and Henry II of

England – and, with the latter, produced three monarchs of England: Henry the Young King, Richard the Lionheart and King John.

Like most medieval queens, Eleanor's influence was very much dependent on her relationship with the king – whether he was her son or husband. Yet she was no passive observer of the great affairs of state. She was fiery, highly ambitious, and intensely involved in raw power-politics for decades. She governed nations, sponsored rebellions and offered counsel to her sons in the final years of her long life, when most of her contemporaries had been dead for years. In short, she was one of the most influential figures in 12th-century Europe.

Given Eleanor's huge and enduring influence – and her sex – it's hardly surprising that she fascinated contemporary commentators. She commanded widespread admiration

but was also regarded as sexually dangerous, even attracting what is often called a 'black legend'. Gervase of Canterbury called her "an extremely astute woman... but flighty". Her grandfather, Duke William IX of Aquitaine, was one of the first French poets to compose the possibly Islamic-influenced 'courtly love' songs so beloved of the aristocracy. Perhaps this is what inspired the 13th-century French chronicler, the Minstrel of Reims, to concoct an affair between Eleanor and the great Muslim leader Saladin.

Scandalous sister

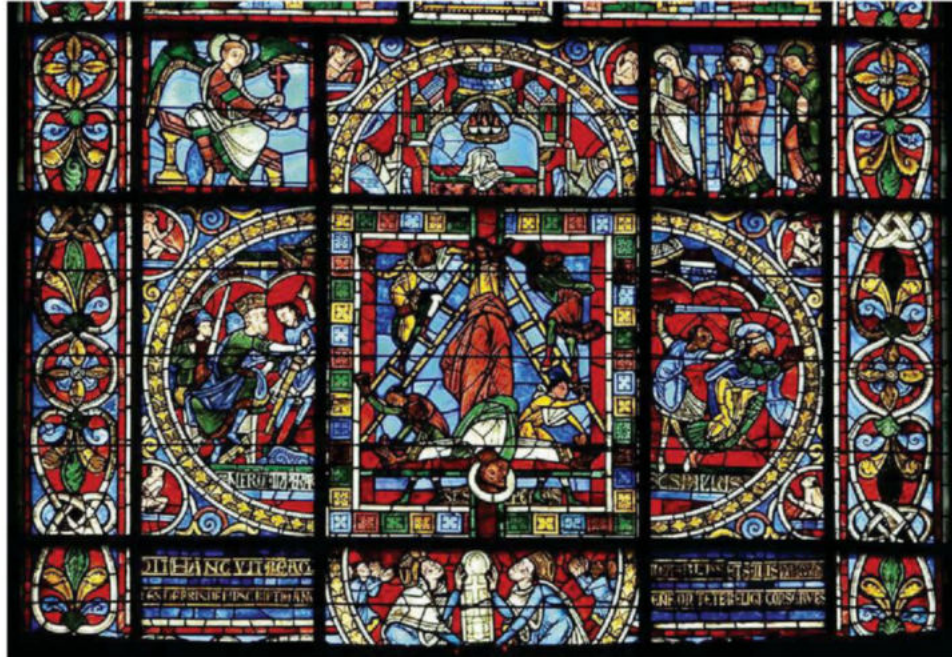
Eleanor of Aquitaine's was hardly a rags-to-riches story. She was born, around 1122–24, to Duke William X of Aquitaine who, as he had no surviving sons, named her as the heiress to the duchy in 1137. On his deathbed, William commended Eleanor to the protection of his overlord, the king of France, who promptly married her off to his own son and heir. Almost immediately, the old king followed William to the grave, and his son became king as Louis VII. Eleanor, perhaps barely into her teens, was now queen of France.

Though Louis adored Eleanor, he ceded little power to her, often issuing charters for Aquitaine with no reference to his young wife. He was, however, susceptible to her influence. In 1141, the Count of Vermandois, a cousin of the king, married Eleanor's younger sister, Petronilla. But there was a problem: the count was already married to a niece of the Count of Champagne. The marriage was bigamous, a crime for which the newly weds were excommunicated.

If that wasn't bad enough for Eleanor's reputation, Louis promptly invaded Champagne and inadvertently burned down a church at Vitry along with the women and children who had taken refuge in it. Many assumed that Eleanor heavily influenced the king's violent response.

This was not the only area where sex and politics made for a toxic mix. Eleanor failed to provide Louis VII with an heir – the most important duty of the queen. The writer of a life of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux claimed Eleanor sought the advice of the austere and unworldly Cistercian abbot as to how she might give birth to a son. Bernard advised her to pray, and to make peace between her husband and the Count of Champagne. It wasn't long before Eleanor gave birth to her first child – but it was a daughter, not the desired son and heir.

In 1144, the Christian state of Edessa fell to Muslim forces and the pope called for a new crusade. Louis VII was quick to take the cross. When he set off in April 1147, he was accompanied by Eleanor and other ladies of the court. There was some contemporary



A window on the Angevin world

The east window of Poitiers Cathedral, dating from 1166–73, was given to the cathedral by Eleanor, Henry II and four of their children. Henry and Eleanor are shown at the bottom holding an image of the window. The four figures above them are probably their sons

criticism of the way that women and non-combatants slowed the crusading army's pace. But the crusades were never just military enterprises. They were regarded as pilgrimages – and both Eleanor and Louis felt the need for penance.

The crusade was a disaster. The Turks decimated Louis and Eleanor's army in Asia Minor, and when the couple reached the court of Eleanor's uncle, Raymond, prince of Antioch, trouble broke out again. Raymond wanted to concentrate on retaking Edessa; Louis insisted that they should march on to the Holy Land. Eleanor's decision to support her uncle in the dispute made the faultlines in her marriage with Louis all too clear.

Louis was furious, and forced his wife to come with him. Rumours were soon spreading that Eleanor and her uncle had flirted outrageously, leaving Louis overcome with jealousy. Soon, relations between the two were so bad that Eleanor asked Louis for a divorce on the grounds that they were related within the degrees prohibited by the church.

In 1149, Louis and Eleanor returned to

France via Rome. The pope, Eugenius III, did his best to reconcile the king and queen – according to John of Salisbury's racy history of the papal court, the pope more or less tucked them in to bed together.

But the marriage was irretrievable. Fifteen years had produced nothing more useful than two daughters. Eleanor had first suggested divorce; it was Louis who now pursued it. He convoked a great council at Beaugency that annulled the union on the grounds of consanguinity. Eleanor headed for Poitiers. Her marriage had left her with an unenviable reputation: as a quarrelsome and perhaps inappropriately flirtatious wife, whose political influence might be baleful, and whose sister was a bigamist.

For all that, as Duchess of Aquitaine, she was a huge prize. Stretching from the Loire to the Pyrenees, Aquitaine was rich in resources: the wines, for which Bordeaux is still known, were already renowned; its long coast had important salt pans; Bordeaux and La Rochelle were major trading ports.

Strength of personality

Marriage was in Eleanor's interests too: she was conscious of her lineage, and she needed to provide a male heir to succeed her as Duke of Aquitaine. She seems to have made her own choice – Henry, the young Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou, who had come to Louis' court in August 1151. She sent for him as soon as she reached safety in Poitiers and, in May 1152, they were married in Poitiers Cathedral. Louis, as overlord of both Eleanor and Duke Henry, tried to prevent the marriage and to hold on to the duchy of Aquitaine. But he lacked the military resources to do either.

Henry was very different from Louis. Grandson of Henry I of England, and son of

Eleanor's marriage left her with an unenviable reputation as a flirtatious wife, with a baleful political influence

The life of Eleanor of Aquitaine



A contemporary depiction of the Second Crusade

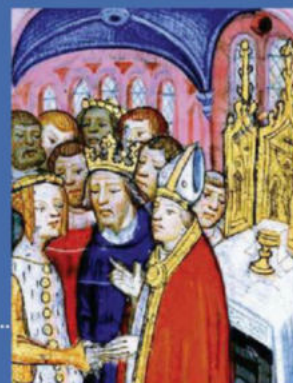
Eleanor is born, the daughter of Duke William X of Aquitaine and his wife Aliénor of Châtellerauld, in either 1122 or 1124

1122/1124

Louis and Eleanor go on the Second Crusade, where her relationship with her uncle, Raymond of Antioch, threatens to destroy their marriage

1137

Eleanor becomes Duchess of Aquitaine on her father's death, and is married to the heir to the French throne, who immediately becomes king of France as Louis VII



Eleanor weds Louis in an image from the *Chronique de St Denis*

1141-44

Louis divorces Eleanor on the grounds of consanguinity. Eleanor marries Henry of Anjou, a claimant to the English throne

1147-49

Louis and Eleanor support the bigamous marriage of Eleanor's sister Petronilla to Count Ralph of Vermandois - despite opposition from the church and the Count of Champagne

1152

Eleanor's second husband, King Henry II of England



Henry succeeds to the English throne, and Henry and Eleanor are crowned king and queen of England at Westminster Abbey

1154

Henry installs Eleanor at Poitiers to rule Aquitaine for him, alongside her son Richard, now made Count of Poitou

1168

Richard I depicted in a medieval floor tile, originally in Chertsey Abbey



1173-74

Eleanor joins her sons' rebellion against Henry, but is captured and imprisoned for the rest of Henry's lifetime

1189

Eleanor ensures the succession of her son John to the Angevin lands, rather than her grandson, Arthur of Brittany

Richard succeeds to the Angevin realms, releases Eleanor and asks her to ensure the succession in England for him

1192-94

Eleanor stabilises England during Richard's captivity on the continent, raises his ransom and negotiates his release

1199



A Plantagenet monarch, possibly King John, is shown during a hunt



King Richard languishes in prison in Vienna

Eleanor dies and is buried at Fontevraud. In June, Normandy falls to French king Philip Augustus

31 March 1204

the Empress Matilda (see box on page 31), he had, even as a young man, a powerful personality with a natural authority and decisiveness. In strength of personality, Eleanor and Henry were well matched. And Eleanor had no problem in providing this husband with an heir: they had at least five sons and three daughters.

In October 1154, Henry succeeded to the English throne, adding England to the continental domains that he ruled already: Normandy, Greater Anjou, and Aquitaine in right of his wife. The Duchess of Aquitaine was once again a queen-consort.

Chafing at the bit

Although Henry was a far more energetic and formidable ruler than Louis, Eleanor wielded more power during her second marriage than her first. Henry made little attempt to impose real authority over Aquitaine; his realm was enormous, and the king could not be everywhere at once. During the first 14 years of his reign, he often entrusted England to his queen to rule as his regent, while he concerned himself with his continental lands. In 1165–66, Eleanor governed Anjou for Henry. Then, in 1168, the king installed Eleanor at Poitiers, back in the duchy of her birth.

Henry may have been among Europe's most powerful rulers, but by 1170 things were beginning to go wrong. He had to do penance for the murder of Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, in which he was implicated. And as his sons grew up they became power-hungry. Henry had the eldest, also Henry, crowned associate king of England in 1170, and gave Poitou and Brittany to Richard and Geoffrey respectively. But still the sons chafed under the father's authority.

In April 1173, they broke out in open rebellion. Many of the aristocracy of the Angevin realms supported the young princes – the coming men – against the old king. Eleanor also sided with her sons against her husband; indeed most contemporary chroniclers thought she was instrumental in persuading them to revolt.

It seems that Eleanor too may have tired of Henry's authoritarian ways. She probably wanted more freedom to rule Aquitaine. Perhaps she resented her husband's many and increasing infidelities. Undoubtedly she begrudged his side-lining of her as queen.

Whatever her motivation, it was the greatest mistake of her life, for she was captured by Henry's forces as she tried to escape from Poitou to the French court. Many had assumed that Henry was finished. As it turned out, this was far from the case.

But the old king did not humiliate his sons in victory. He came to terms with them, and they maintained an uneasy peace until the



late 1180s. But he did not forgive the treachery of his queen. Eleanor spent the rest of his reign as his prisoner. She was kept under house arrest in appropriate luxury. Occasionally, Henry brought her to play the queenly role at one of his great courtly gatherings. But mainly she was kept far from the court. Politically, she was impotent. These must have been the most frustrating years of her life.

Richard's accession in 1189 changed that. The effortless authority with which Eleanor secured the kingdom for her son reflects her political acumen and her considerable experience as a ruler. Eleanor held the great Angevin realm together when Richard was

captured by Duke Leopold of Austria while returning from crusade in 1192. As Richard endured captivity, his younger brother John plotted with the new king of France, Philip Augustus, to take the throne – until Eleanor arrived back in England and dealt with him. She raised the huge sum of 150,000 marks for Richard's ransom and negotiated her son's release, demanding help from the pope in a letter from "Eleanor, by the wrath of God, Queen of England". Richard demonstrated his gratitude through the prominent role that he gave his mother at the coronation that marked his return in 1194.

Forced march

At Richard's death in 1199, it was Eleanor who assured the succession of John to the Angevin lands. John had a potential rival in his nephew Arthur, Count of Brittany, son of John's older brother Geoffrey. But Richard had left his realm to John on his deathbed, and Eleanor supported his decision, rallying support for John in Anjou and Normandy. At one point, it appeared that Eleanor's loyalty to John would cost her dear, for Arthur went on the offensive, placing her under siege at Mirabeau. But Eleanor was rescued by her son, who executed a brilliant forced march to save her. Arthur promptly disappeared into John's dungeons.

Not content with championing her sons' claims to the English throne, Eleanor also

The authority with which **Eleanor secured the kingdom** for Richard reflects her political acumen and experience



Reunited in death

Eleanor lies next to her second husband, Henry II, at Fontevraud Abbey in Anjou. While Henry's effigy depicts him dressed in full royal regalia, as if on his way to burial, the queen lies awake, with a book in her hands. The couple's powerful personalities made them a formidable partnership but also ensured that, when they fell out, they did so spectacularly



Rock of ages

The Eleanor Vase, which comprises a rock crystal flask, set in jewelled mounts. The Muslim king of Saragossa gave the vase to William IX of Aquitaine, who passed it on to his granddaughter Eleanor, who in turn gave it to the abbot of Saint-Denis

helped secure two marriages designed to strengthen their grip on power. Back in 1191, when King Richard had wed Berengaria of Navarre in 1191, it was Eleanor who accompanied Berengaria from her home kingdom to Sicily, where the marriage – which built an alliance with Navarre and protected Richard's southernmost territories – took place.

Eleanor also played a starring role in the negotiations that would lead to a marriage linking King John's England with Philip Augustus's France. In 1200, as part of a treaty between the two nations, Philip insisted on the marriage of his own heir, the future Louis VIII, to one of John's nieces, a daughter of the king of Castile. The niece would be, as one chronicler put it, "in her own person the guarantee of peace". Since John had no direct heir at the time, it was a marriage on which the future of the Angevin realm might turn.

John sent Eleanor to Castile to finalise the negotiations with the king of Castile and his queen, Eleanor's daughter. There Eleanor chose the most suitable of her granddaughters, and then accompanied her back across the Pyrenees and up through Aquitaine. Doubtless she acquainted the 12-year-old with the political vortex into which she would be thrown. She had chosen well. Blanche of Castile turned out to be one of the greatest queens of the Middle Ages, a woman whose appetite and aptitude for holding

power was equal to Eleanor's.

For the last decade of her life, Eleanor established herself at Fontevraud, a distinguished nunnery on the border of Anjou and Poitou. She did not become a nun, but lived in her own house within the precinct of the abbey. Henry lay buried in the nun's choir. Richard had ordered his own burial there, and when he died, Eleanor brought his body to the abbey she now regarded as her home. Soon her daughter Joanna joined her father and brother in what was fast becoming a family mausoleum.

And then, in March 1204, at the age of 80 or 82, Eleanor was laid to rest there too. Her last months were clouded by news of the implosion of the Angevin realm at the hands of the king of France. It was a sad end to what was one of medieval Europe's most remarkable – and, in many ways, triumphant – lives. **H**

Lindy Grant is professor of medieval history at the University of Reading. Her book *Blanche of Castile, Queen of France* will be published by Yale in September

DISCOVER MORE

LISTEN AGAIN

► To listen to Melvyn Bragg discuss Eleanor of Aquitaine with guests including Lindy Grant on **In Our Time**, go to bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06yfhqk



Leading ladies

Five other women who changed the face of medieval Europe

Matilda of Scotland

(c1080–1118)

Matilda was deeply trusted by her husband, Henry I, who usually left her to govern England while he dealt with Normandy. Of Scottish and Anglo-Saxon stock, she was a sophisticated patron of literature and the visual arts, and renowned for her piety, and her generous religious benefactions.

Empress Matilda (1102–67)

On the death of her brother in 1120, Matilda became the sole heir of her father – Henry I of England – who tried to ensure that she would succeed him. Her cousin Stephen of Blois seized the English throne on Henry's death, and Matilda spent many years fighting for it, then – successfully – pursuing the claim of her son Henry to the crown. Henry II had great respect for his mother's advice, and she governed Normandy for him until her death.

Matilda of Boulogne (c1105–52)

Heiress to the strategically important county of Boulogne, she was the wife of King Stephen and Eleanor's immediate predecessor as queen of England. An educated cultural patron, Matilda proved a formidably effective queen after Stephen was captured in 1141.

Marie of Champagne

(1145–98)

Alongside her husband, Henry the Liberal, Count of Champagne, Marie ran the most overtly literary court in western Europe. A highly effective political operator, Eleanor of Aquitaine's eldest daughter governed the county of Champagne on three separate occasions.

Blanche of Castile (1188–1252)

Eleanor's granddaughter was married to the heir to the French throne, the future Louis VIII. She and her husband tried unsuccessfully to take the English throne from King John in 1216–17. Louis VIII died in 1226 after a brief reign, leaving Blanche as regent for their young son, Louis IX (Saint Louis) until he came of age in 1234. She was widely regarded by contemporaries as a formidably effective queen regent, and as an important moral influence on her children.

OUR FIRST WORLD WAR

Objectors and oases

In part 27 of his personal testimony series, **Peter Hart** takes us to August 1916, when conscientious objectors and troops in the Sinai Desert and on the western front faced very different challenges. Peter will be tracing the experiences of 20 people who lived through the First World War – via interviews, letters and diary entries – as its centenary progresses.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES ALBON



Harold Bing

Born in Croydon in 1897, Harold was brought up a pacifist, following the philosophical views of Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy. When war broke out in 1914 he was 16 years old. The following year he left school to begin work at a London insurance firm.

Harold and his father were both pacifists, and had joined the Croydon branch of the No-Conscription Fellowship. In the summer of 1916, Bing was required to attend a tribunal to consider his plea for exemption from conscription as introduced by the Military Service Act that year.

“The hearing was rather a farce. I had my father and other friends there as witnesses to speak on my behalf if necessary. The chairman of the tribunal, after one or two formal questions, asked me how

old I was. I said I was 18 years of age. He said: “Oh, in that case you’re not old enough to have a conscience. Case dismissed!”

My father got up to protest at such summary treatment, but the chairman called: “Next case, next case, next case!” They did grant me a certificate for non-combatant service – which of course I’d explained that I was not prepared to undertake.

In due course I appeared before the county appeal tribunal. There the treatment was quite different. The chairman was a trained judge, and certainly the proceeding was quite fair and legal. He said he quite recognised the inadequacy of the first hearing, and we could regard the case as starting afresh, and he had carefully read through all the documents. He heard my father and myself as witnesses and finally agreed that I could be allowed exemption on condition of doing work of national importance – forestry, agriculture and so on.

To Harold, any type of war-related work was unacceptable. After further hearings at which he resolutely refused to compromise, he was refused any exemption – which, as he was then over 18, meant that he was liable for immediate conscription. Harold was on a collision course with the military authorities.



George Horridge

Born into a wealthy textile manufacturing family in Bury, Lancashire in 1894, George went to Uppingham School, then from 1912 worked in the family business. He was commissioned as a territorial in the 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers in 1913, and was called up on the outbreak of war in August 1914.

Having trained in Cairo and Alexandria, George was wounded at Gallipoli and hospitalised in England with dysentery, before rejoining his battalion in Egypt in May 1916. Promoted to lieutenant, George was given increased responsibility as a company commander. The Turkish army had threatened the Suez Canal, but were soundly defeated at the battle of Romani (3-5 August 1916), after which British forces advanced into the hostile Sinai Desert.

PICTURE CONSULTANT: EVERETT SHARP / GETTY IMAGES

“Then commenced the two-day march from Romani to Katia oasis, in full battle order with 200 rounds of ammunition per man. We marched from soon after light until about 4pm and covered about 16 miles. Many men drank all their water; some had gone a bit peculiar in the head, and dug for brackish water near isolated clumps of palm trees.

Many men fell out on the march, and others straggled out behind their units. By keeping officers marching behind the platoons of my company I kept a more closed-up order and only a few of my men fell out. As time went on, equipment that men couldn't carry was slung round my horse, Prince, and for the last few miles he carried 'Umpty' North, my second-in-command who became quite done-up.

At Katia, the troops flopped under the palm trees. When I asked for volunteers to fill water bottles from the well, there was no reply – everyone was too exhausted. So Sergeant Major Jones and I collected the bottles and, slinging them on Prince, went to the well – Jones, myself and Prince got an early drink!



Young men enter a meeting of the No-Conscription Fellowship in April 1916



Thomas Louch

Thomas was born in Geraldton, Western Australia in 1894. When war broke out he joined the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), trained in Egypt and was injured at Gallipoli. Commissioned with the 51st Battalion, he arrived on the western front in June 1916.

By August Thomas had arrived at the Somme front, where he was serving as the intelligence officer with the 51st Australian Battalion. The conditions on the Somme came as a surprise to many Australians, who had no idea of the destruction caused by massed artillery. On the night of 14 August, they would attack the high ground to the right of Mouquet Farm – a planned advance of about 500 metres.

“When the barrage opened at 10.30pm, it failed to silence enemy machine guns which, firing in enfilade [along the whole length of a line], broke up the attack and caused many casualties. More were caused by short shooting on the part of our own artillery. By dawn, the survivors were back where they started. The four stretcher bearers and two stretchers per company were quite inadequate to deal with casualties of this magnitude. The long carry to the regimental aid post was laborious for the bearers and painful for the wounded. It was not until, in desperation, the bearers took to walking in the open that they found that they were not fired upon by the enemy. It was a chastening introduction to the nature of warfare on the western front.

“We were on top of the trench, scrapping away, but Jerry was firing his machine guns and we didn't know it”



George Ashurst

Born near Wigan in 1895, at the age of 13 George worked in a colliery. Called up in August 1914, he suffered frostbite on the western front and was gassed at Ypres in May 1915, serving in Gallipoli and Egypt before returning to the western front in March 1916.

George had survived Gallipoli and the Somme, but in August 1916 he was wounded in somewhat unusual circumstances. He was about 600 metres behind the front line in the Ypres salient, supervising a working party digging a deep narrow trench to bury a telephone line. They had reached below the water level and the men had taken off their socks to keep them dry, but carried on digging – all except one lance corporal who stubbornly refused to get into the water-filled trench.

“He had his share to dig, but he said he wasn't getting in to dig it. I said: “You'll have to get in and do it!” He said: “I'm not!” I said: “You'll have to get in and get it done and then we can get away by daylight!” He said: “I don't care a bugger! Who do you think you are?” We were arguing, then he thumped me and I thumped him! We were on top of the trench, scrapping away, but Jerry was firing his machine guns and we didn't know it – we were that engrossed in our fight we never heard it! The lads were shouting “Get under!” – but too late. The lance corporal dropped in the trench, shouting, and as I dropped in they were saying: “Stretcher bearers – the lance corporal has got hit in the thigh.” I knew my leg was going a bit dead, so I asked the man next to me to feel it; he felt the flow of blood and the bullet hole. He said, “You've got hit too, corporal.”

George Ashurst and his erstwhile opponent were safely evacuated to the dressing station by the stretcher bearers.

“The doctor came around to me, kneeling down beside my stretcher. He looked at the clean bullet wound through my left thigh, from which the orderly had removed the temporary dressing, then – half-smiling – he said to me: “I will give you a fiver for it.” Quickly I answered: “Is it a blighty, sir?” [A wound needing treatment away from the front.] “Yes,” he said. “Then you can't have it for five bloody thousand, sir!” I said.

Glancing across at my recent opponent, the lance corporal, who lay a few feet away, the doctor said: “You've done far better than your pal over there. The bullet has smashed his bone to smithereens.” I was very sorry to hear that. ■

Peter Hart is the oral historian at the Imperial War Museum

DISCOVER MORE

WEBSITE

► Read previous installments of “Our First World War” at historyextra.com/bbchistory-magazine/ourfirstworldwar

TV AND RADIO

► The BBC's First World War coverage is continuing – please check the TV & Radio updates on historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine





Save when you subscribe
to the digital edition



Available from



zinioTM



BBC History Magazine is Britain's bestselling history magazine. We feature leading historians writing lively and thought-provoking new takes on the great events of the past.



Enjoy our Premium App experience now available from

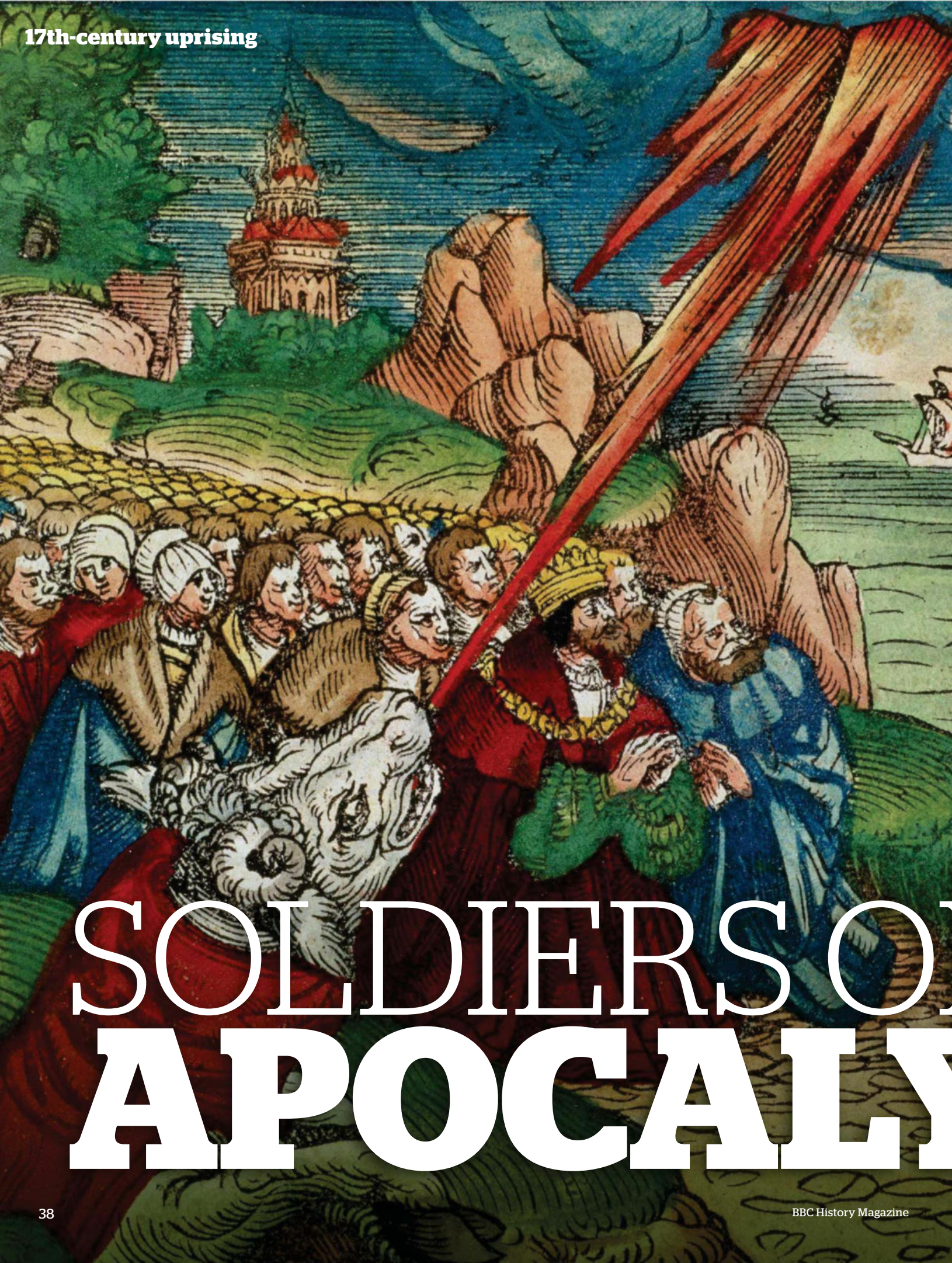


zinioTM




BBC **HiSTORY**
MAGAZINE

17th-century uprising



SOLDIERS OF APOCALYPSE



End of the world
A seven-headed
serpent
emerges from
the sea in this
c1530 woodcut of a
scene from the Book
of Revelation, which
heavily influenced the
Fifth Monarchists'
apocalyptic world view

THE YPSE

In 1661, a group of religious fanatics plotted to butcher Charles II and summon 'King Jesus' down to Earth. **Robert Hutchinson** tells the story of the Fifth Monarchist insurgency



For four bloody days in 1661, London was terrorised by a suicidal band of Christian zealots attempting to seize England's capital city in the name of King Jesus. The diarist Samuel Pepys was awakened at 6am on

Wednesday 9 January by panic-stricken shouts "that the fanatics were up in arms in the city... I found everybody [with] arms at their doors. So I returned (though with no good courage and that I might not look afraid) and got my sword and pistol [for] which I had no [gun] powder." He therefore decided to remain indoors that day.

Pepys was prudent: a terrifying slaughter was going on in the heart of the city. A group of armed religious insurgents were rampaging through the narrow streets, defeating efforts by hastily summoned troops to eliminate them. Their fanaticism was bolstered by their belief that bullets could not harm them.

These insurrectionists called themselves 'Fifth Monarchists' or 'visible Saints', and combined religious and political objectives with radical fundamentalism, derived from narrow interpretations of religious texts.

Their confidence in an imminent apocalyptic 'Fifth Monarchy' came from prophecies in the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation. Four empires (the Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman) would precede the 'Fifth Kingdom', the thousand-year reign of Christ on Earth, lasting from his Second Coming till the Last Trump. This would be heralded by the establishment of a worldwide godly government, the 'Rule of the Saints'.

The year 1666 held special significance for Fifth Monarchists because of its similarity to Revelation's 'Number of the Beast' (666), which indicated the end of earthly rule by carnal human beings. But first, existing corrupt governments must be overthrown by violence, which is why Samuel Pepys and his fellow Londoners found themselves under attack on 9 January 1661.

Death to lawyers

Having flickered into life in England's capital in the 1650s, Fifth Monarchism spread like wildfire through southern England into north Wales, East Anglia, Devon and Cornwall. Many Civil War veterans were adherents, including Major General Thomas Harrison, parliamentarian hero of the battles of Knutsford and Worcester in 1651. Several were in Oliver Cromwell's own Ironsides regiment; another was one of his personal life guard. Cromwell's navy was also a hotbed.

These men's political manifesto demanded the destruction of the monarchy and nobility and the privileged classes, especially lawyers.



Once the old order had been swept away, the Saints' theocracy would rule a society where godliness determined status. The judicial system would use the Bible's Mosaic Code, with offences against God rather than the community. Property belonging to the 'ungodly' would be confiscated and distributed to the poor.

Conversion to the Fifth Monarchists' cause had an immediate impact. When her dog jumped on her bed, one woman was struck speechless with terror, believing that Satan had come to claim her. An 11-year-old girl dreamt of a "burning lake" and saw the "Devil with all his chains". At least nine members of 20 Fifth Monarchist congregations in London considered attempting – or did attempt – suicide.

Following his victory over royalist forces and the execution of King Charles I, many Fifth Monarchists hailed Oliver Cromwell as a second Moses, who would lead God's people to their promised land. Their political influence peaked in the Nominated Assembly of 1653 (a 'parliament' dominated by army officers), but when this was dissolved and Cromwell was declared 'lord protector' of England, Ireland and Scotland, the Saints found themselves increasingly marginalised. Cromwell's new government was anathema to

them, and the erstwhile 'Second Moses' was suddenly top of their hitlist.

John Thurloe, Cromwell's spymaster, warned that Saints held five clandestine meetings in London to organise Cromwell's overthrow in April 1657. Their leader was a Devon-born cooper called Thomas Venner.

The Fifth Monarchists planned to attack a troop of cavalry, then march on East Anglia, where they hoped rebels would rally to their flag. A bomb was also to be detonated in the cellar of a London house. The crusade was to start at Mile End Green on the evening of 9 April 1657, but it immediately turned into a fiasco.

Cavalry troopers attacked as the Saints mustered, arrested 20 and seized a substantial cache of arms, hundreds of copies of their manifesto and almost £6,000 in cash. The rebels, it was discovered, had enough weapons for 25,000 men, planned to cut Cromwell's throat and slaughter the entire nobility. Their leader was immediately thrown into prison.

Muskets and swords

Such a body blow would have proved fatal for many revolutionary movements. Not the Fifth Monarchists. In fact, by 1661 their numbers had swollen to an estimated 30,000 in England and Wales. The extremists among

Venner promised that the Fifth Monarchists would be invulnerable to bullets as **they were to strike the final blow for 'King Jesus'**



A scene from a 1681 history of the city of London shows Fifth Monarchists exchanging fire with troops. Their uprising sent London into lockdown

them needed a leader, and the charismatic Thomas Venner – who had been freed in 1659 – again fitted the bill.

On Sunday 6 January 1661, 50 Saints gathered at Venner's meeting house to collect weapons and armour for the coup d'état: blunderbusses, muskets, swords and halberds.

Venner promised they would be invulnerable to bullets as they were to strike the final blow for 'King Jesus'. Those opposing them should be killed. Their objective was to destroy "the powers of the Earth" in England: Charles II, his brother James, Duke of York, and General George Monck, Duke of Albermarle. The first strike would be against that symbol of the Anglican church: St Paul's Cathedral.

Bizarrely, the heavily armed party called at the home of a bookseller called Johnson in St Paul's churchyard to ask for the cathedral's keys. When they were refused, they broke in.

The rebels then challenged a passerby: "Who are you for?" When he replied "God and King Charles", he was shot through the heart and fell dead on the cobbles.

After repulsing 72 musketeers who had been dispatched to quell the affray, the Fifth Monarchists marched onto Aldersgate and, in St Giles' Cripplegate, killed a constable. They then hid in Kenwood, near Hampstead Heath, but were driven out of the woods by troops.

Samuel Pepys heard of the insurrection the next morning: "A great stir in the city by the fanatics, who killed six or seven men, but all are fled. My lord mayor and the whole City had been in arms, above 40,000." London was now in lockdown. Returning from Twelfth

Cooper, soldier, spy

Two leading Fifth Monarchists and a spook who attempted to foil them

Thomas Venner, 1608–61

THE COOPER

The leader of the two abortive Fifth Monarchist insurrections was the barrel-maker Thomas Venner, born in Littleham, Devon. By 1633, he had moved to London, and was associated with 'Praise-God Barebones', a charismatic Fifth Monarchist preacher.

Venner emigrated to Salem, Massachusetts, where he was a constable in 1642. He then moved to Boston, serving in the city's artillery militia, before returning to England in October 1651,

with his wife Alice and three children under 10.

Venner was employed until 1655 as a cooper at the Tower of London when he was sacked after being suspected of plotting to blow up the fortress.

Venner became chief preacher of a Fifth Monarchist congregation in Swan Alley in the City of London.

After the failure of the rebellion against Cromwell, he was imprisoned until 1659 and executed after the rising of 1661.



Major General Thomas Harrison, 1606–60

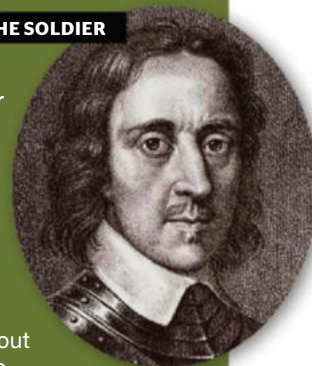
THE SOLDIER

Harrison was a Fifth Monarchist leader who opposed Cromwell's elevation to lord protector, a stance that saw him dismissed from the army and imprisoned four times during the Protectorate.

He was one of the regicides who signed Charles I's death warrant in 1649 and the first to be executed at the Restoration. On the way to being hanged, drawn and quartered, a spectator taunted: "Where is your Good Old Cause now?" Harrison "clapped his hand on his breast and retorted: 'Here it is and I go to seal it

with my blood.'"

The old soldier warned that "he was sure to come shortly at the right hand of Christ to judge them that had judged him". Half-dead, Harrison was about to be hacked into quarters but struggled to his feet and boxed the executioner's ears before being dispatched.



John Thurloe, 1616–68

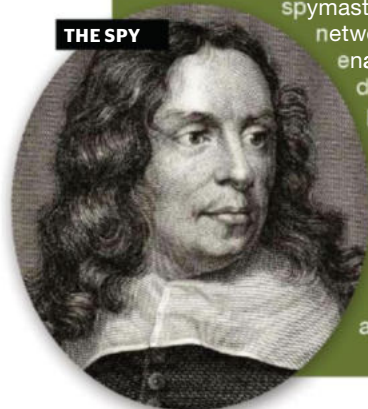
Thurloe was Cromwell's secretary of state and, from early 1654, his spymaster, whose

network of agents enabled him to destroy every plot to assassinate the lord protector. He was also postmaster general from 1655, which allowed him to

intercept letters and monitor sedition by groups like the Fifth Monarchists. In May 1660, on the restoration of the monarchy, he was arrested for high treason but released to become a behind-the-scenes adviser to Charles II's government on intelligence and foreign affairs.

A portrait of Thurloe by Thomas Ross was acquired by the Government Art Collection in 2007. It now adorns the office of 'C' – the director general of MI6 in the spy agency's headquarters at Vauxhall Cross.

THE SPY





Leading Fifth Monarchists are executed on 19 January 1661 following the bloody failure of their uprising. Their leader, Thomas Venner, was hanged, drawn and quartered

Samuel Pepys was astonished at how so few **desperate men could bring London to a standstill**: “These fanatics who have done this are... in all about 31”

Night celebrations, Pepys was “strictly examined” at “many places... there being great fears of these fanatics”.

The Saints returned to the City at dawn on Wednesday 9 January. Venner repeated his pledge that “No weapons employed against them would prosper, nor a hair on their heads be touched”. (Government troops also believed the Saints had magic or poisoned bullets as “It was observed that all they shot, though ever so slightly wounded, died”).

Venner, wearing a steel morion helmet, and carrying a halberd, took some Fifth Monarchists to the Comptor gaol in Wood Street and demanded that its prisoners be freed “or else [the gaolers] were dead men”. But, with all available forces in London now mobilised – including 700 Life Guard cavalry and Albemarle’s infantry regiment – the net was tightening around the Fifth Monarchists. And when a cavalry detachment charged at them, Venner fell badly wounded and his two lieutenants were killed.

Ten Saints then broke into the Blue Anchor ale house near the city walls for a last stand. Musketeers fought their way up the stairs, broke through a barricaded door and shot six, as soldiers sniped through holes in the roof

tiles. Twenty-two Saints died in the street fighting, and another 20 were taken prisoner. Venner killed three soldiers and sustained 19 wounds before his capture. A woman was detained dressed “all in armour”.

Pepys was astonished at how so few desperate men could bring London to a standstill. “These fanatics that have done all this – routed all the Trained Bands; put the king’s Life Guards to the run, broke through the city gates twice – are... in all about 31.”

The surviving rebels were tried for high treason on 17 January at the Old Bailey. Venner was one of two men hanged, drawn and quartered; the others were hanged and then beheaded.

Hanged or transported

Unfortunately for Charles II, the Fifth Monarchist cause didn’t die with Venner. In fact, the king’s secret service spent much of the following decade trying to defeat numerous conspiracies hatched by the Saints and their nonconformist allies. In 1662 there was a plot to kidnap the king and his brother in an attack on Whitehall Palace on All Hallows’ Eve. The Tower was to be seized and a sergeant and a gunner at Windsor Castle were

suborned as a first step to capturing that too. Three years later, there was another Fifth Monarchist plan to kill Charles II and set London ablaze.

But by the end of Charles’s reign, the imprisonment of their leaders had weakened the Saints’ threat. Their movement was also dying, mainly because the apocalypse had not come. Many Fifth Monarchists fought for the Duke of Monmouth in his uprising against England’s new king, James II and VII, in 1685. Venner’s eldest son, Thomas, a cashiered army officer, was lieutenant colonel in Monmouth’s regiment and was wounded in a skirmish at Bridport, Dorset on 14 June. After Monmouth’s defeat at Sedgemoor, many Fifth Monarchists were hanged or transported. Venner junior escaped retribution having gone to the Netherlands to buy munitions.

The last popular manifestation of belief in the imminent apocalypse was in the unlikely surroundings of Water Stratford in Buckinghamshire. The Reverend John Mason, rector of St Giles’ Church, had accused Charles II of surrendering to the Beast and warned of the Second Coming. In 1694, he had a vision of Christ, who revealed that ‘New Jerusalem’ was to be his parish. The revelation galvanised the neighbourhood. Scores of people gathered in the village, many camping out in tents on a field across the river Ouse, renamed ‘Mount Pleasant’. Henry Maurice, rector of Tyringham, found Mason’s home full of disciples “running up and down”, their prayers “as loud as their throats gave them leave, till they were quite spent and black in the face”.

Mason predicted that after his death, he would be resurrected on the third day and his body carried up into heaven. He died the following month, and was buried on 22 May 1694. His followers refused to believe that he had not risen again: some claimed they had spoken to him after his death. The new rector was forced to exhume Mason’s remains as grisly proof that he really was dead.

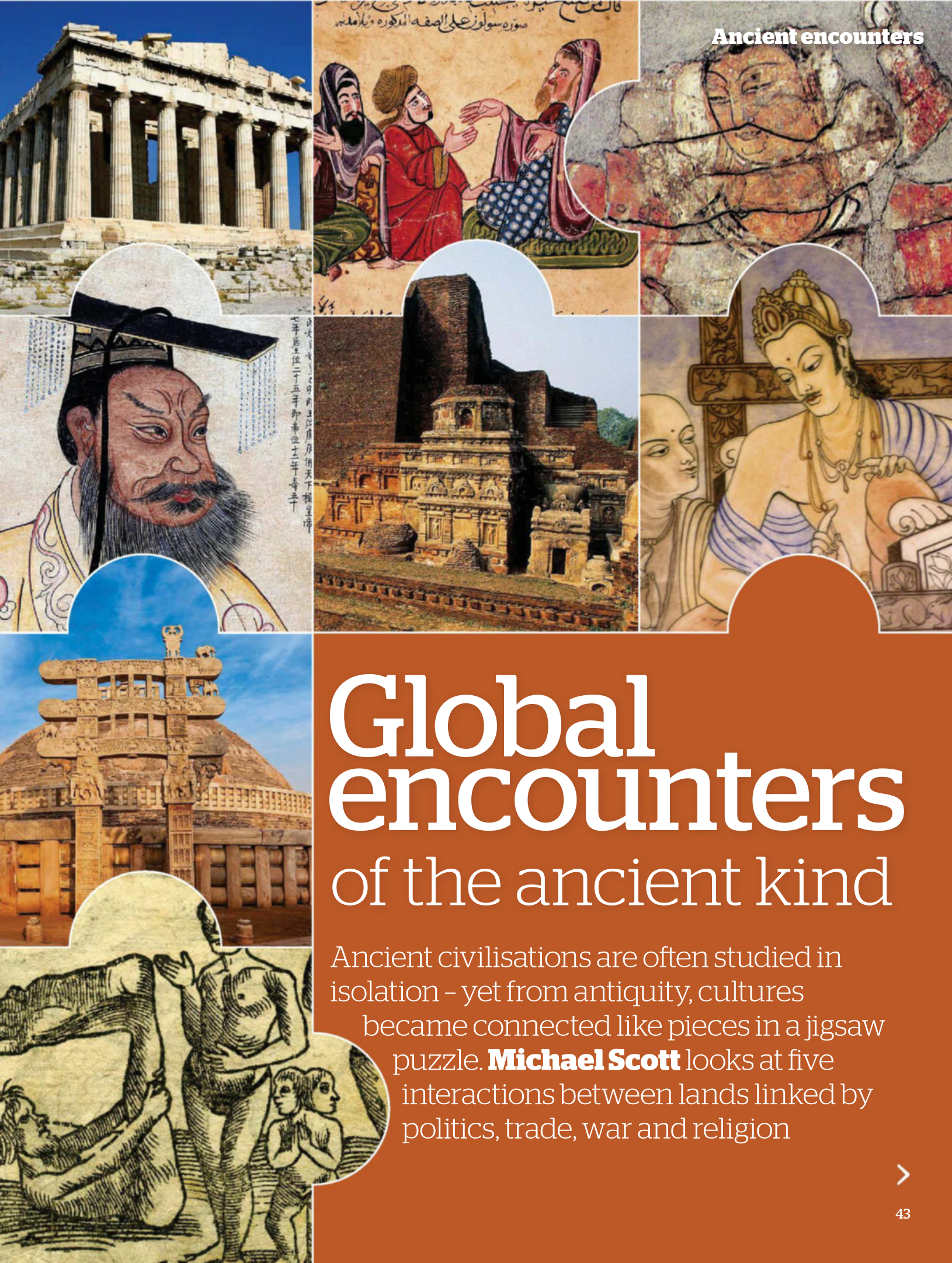
This did not persuade his followers and they continued to squat on the ‘Holy Ground’ until they were dispersed by militia 15 years later. **H**

Robert Hutchinson OBE is a historian and fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. His books include *The Audacious Crimes of Colonel Blood* and *The Spanish Armada* (both Weidenfeld & Nicolson)

DISCOVER MORE

BOOKS

- **The Fifth Monarchy Men** by Bernard Capp (Faber and Faber, 2011)
- **Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England** by Andrew Bradstock (IB Tauris, 2010)



Ancient encounters

Global encounters of the ancient kind

Ancient civilisations are often studied in isolation – yet from antiquity, cultures became connected like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. **Michael Scott** looks at five interactions between lands linked by politics, trade, war and religion



Ancient encounters

PICTURE CAPTIONS FROM PREVIOUS PAGE:

COLUMN 1 (TOP TO BOTTOM): **The Parthenon; Qin Shi Huangdi, the first Qin emperor; the Great Stupa at Sanchi, a Buddhist monument built in the third century BC; human-like creatures in an illustration based on the Greek historian Ctesias's account of India.** COLUMN 2 (TOP TO BOTTOM): **the Athenian statesman Solon debates with students; Nalanda monastery in northern India.** COLUMN 3 (TOP TO BOTTOM): **A third-century AD Chinese mural of the Buddha; Indian emperor Chandragupta Maurya**

When cultures collide

As our map shows, encounters between ancient civilisations created networks between places as far-flung as Greece and India



1 Rome to Athens 2 Greece to India 3 Eastern nomads to Greco-Bactria 4 Buddhists to China 5 Chinese to India

1 Republicans on a political recce

Romans in Athens 454 BC

Just over half a century after the Roman Republic was established, the Roman body politic was in trouble. The political system had been blocked for almost a decade; the Tribunes of the Plebs (officers representing the interests of the everyday people) demanded reform of the system and a rebalancing of power between patrician (aristocratic) and plebian (everyone else) groups. So in 454 BC a three man commission was appointed to travel to Athens – where the democratic revolution had occurred at about the same time as the birth of the Roman Republic – to research how the politics of that city-state worked, and to bring back possible solutions for the crisis in Rome.

By 454 BC Athens was the emerging power of the eastern Mediterranean. An Athenian empire was evolving; memories of its triumph over Persian invaders were still fresh, its people engaged in direct democracy, and the building project that would include the Parthenon was imminent. But it was not Athens' democratic principles and processes that

intrigued the Roman delegation. Rome had no interest in becoming a democracy. Instead it sought to balance rights and responsibilities among the different elements of its society – not equally, but in relation to their perceived worth and service.

The Romans had come to study the laws and reforms of Solon, who had undertaken a systematic review of the Athenian system some 150 years earlier. We can only imagine Athenian reactions as they watched the Romans in deep discussion over reforms the Athenians themselves had surpassed long before, while ignoring the proof of the power of a direct democracy all around them.

After three years of study, the delegation presented its findings in Rome. What followed was farcical. The first 10-man board appointed to write a new constitution failed to complete it; their successors then refused to yield power, till these new 'Ten Tarquins' (as they were known) were ousted. And though the legal code that emerged from this Greek-Roman interaction ended the stalemate in the political system, the class strife inherent in Roman society would continue for centuries to come.



The Parthenon, on the Acropolis in Athens. Construction began in 447 BC, shortly after a Roman delegation arrived to study Athenian politics

2 The success of a slaveless society

A Greek in India 300 BC

Around the end of the fourth century BC, Megasthenes was sent as the official ambassador of the Greek ruler Seleucus 1st Nicator ('Victor') to the court of Indian emperor Chandragupta Maurya at his capital of Pataliputra (modern day Patna). Of Megasthenes the man we know little, but excerpts from his *Indika* – sometimes rather creative descriptions of India drawn from his privileged position as ambassador – do survive.

In *Indika* Megasthenes told of giant ants that dug for gold and would take on – and kill – humans to protect it; of men whose feet were turned backwards, and others who had no mouths but fed on smells alone. He told of dogs strong enough to take on lions and flying serpents with urine that could blister human skin.

But Megasthenes also wrote about the great city of Pataliputra, defended by more than 570 watchtowers around its outer walls and with a splendour that surpassed the mighty Persian cities of Susa and Ecbatana. He gave us, too, an eye on the ruler and the inner workings of the Indian court. We're told that

Chandragupta spent his days hunting or hearing legal cases while being massaged with wooden rollers. This leader, Megasthenes wrote, embodied the fate of his capital city, and everything about him mattered to the people. When he washed his hair, a festival was celebrated.

Megasthenes was complimentary about the people of Pataliputra, describing them as tall and proud. He remarked with amazement that Indian society, in contrast to the Greek world, seemed to survive without slaves, and experienced little or no theft. And he explicitly intertwined the very origins, mythologies and gods of his home with those of this Indian world. The god Dionysus, he recounted, invaded India; later, the hero Heracles was born in India and even founded the great capital at Pataliputra.

Nor was Megasthenes unusual in being a foreigner in Chandragupta's court. He wrote that an entire branch of government was dedicated to looking after foreigners living in Pataliputra. Clearly, this was a city at the centre of an increasingly inter-connected set of ancient worlds.



This second-century BC four-drachma piece depicts the Indian trident-wielding god Siva, but also incorporates Greek script

Megasthenes wrote of men with no mouths who fed on smells – but also how Indian society survived without slaves

DREAMSTIME.COM/GETTY IMAGES/BRIDGEMAN

This tapestry from a grave in western China dating from the 3rd or 2nd century BC was probably created in Greco-Bactria – indicating early contact between the cultures

3 The ancient migrant crisis that made headlines in the east and west

Eastern nomads in Greco-Bactria 140s BC

At the end of the third century BC, around the same time that Hannibal was challenging Rome, Qin Shi Huangdi – the 'First Emperor of Qin' – created a unified China under his rule. The construction of this empire and its firm boundaries (including the embryonic Great Wall) inevitably had repercussions for the Qin's relationship with nomadic tribes that lived to the north and west. Decades of aggression, accommodation and appeasement followed, leading to the emergence of one pre-eminent tribe: the Xiongnu. In turn, other nomadic tribes such

as the Yuezhi were forced to yield territory to the Xiongnu and themselves flee west. By the 140s BC, these migrants were arriving in central Asia and began to pour into Greco-Bactria, at the time a rich and prosperous trading kingdom on the outer edge of the Hellenistic empire of the Seleucids.

This invasion of Greco-Bactria was recorded by western sources such as Strabo and Justin, whose description of the nomadic tribes certainly echoed other contemporary accounts of the Yuezhi. But what makes this moment all the more remarkable is that this takeover of Greco-Bactria by the nomads

was also described in the eastern Chinese sources. In 138 BC, the Han emperor Wu sent an ambassador, Zhang Qian, west looking for allies against the Xiongnu, who were then still powerful. Returning more than 10 years later, Zhang Qian's accounts, preserved in the great historian Sima Qian's *Shiji*, told how by then the Yuezhi had Greco-Bactria completely under their sway. As a result, this event – the martial meeting of east and west in central Asia – is one of the first to be recorded in both eastern and western histories, and a key moment in the story of ancient global interconnection.

4 Lost and found in translation

Buddhists in China 2nd century AD

In the mid-second century AD, as Buddhist ideas began to find receptive audiences in China, two Buddhists from central Asia travelled east along Silk Road trading routes, settling in the great city of Luoyang, capital of the Han dynasty. The first, An Shigao, was later identified as a prince of the Parthian empire who had given up his wealth, position and claim to the throne to become a Buddhist monk and missionary, one of the earliest known translators into Chinese of Indian Theravada Buddhist texts written in Pali. This was no easy task. Few, if any, people could speak both the Chinese and Indian languages, so simultaneous translation was not possible. Instead, a Buddhist master would discuss the texts with a scribe who had some idea of both languages, creating a rudimentary version that was then polished by Chinese intellectuals. The final version, though, could not really be checked for accuracy by the original Buddhist monk.

The process was made all the more complicated by the sheer variety and number of Buddhist texts pouring into China. At the same time as An Shigao was working in Luoyang, another émigré to the city, Lokaksema, was helping translate texts of Mahayana Buddhism. There was an irony in his movements: Lokaksema was from the Kushan empire established in central Asia in the wake of the Yuezhi takeover of Greco-Bactria back in the second century BC. As a descendant of the Yuezhi, Lokaksema was – in travelling to China – in some ways repeating in reverse the journey his ancestors had made centuries earlier.



A 7th–8th century AD mural from Turpan Oasis, a strategically significant centre on Xinjiang's northern silk route

BRIDGEMAN/ALG-IMAGES

5 The world's first student exchange programme

Chinese travellers in India

Fifth to seventh centuries AD

The traffic in Buddhists wasn't only eastward. In AD 399, a Chinese Buddhist monk called Faxian, then aged 65, began a journey on foot heading west along Silk Road routes, eventually arriving at the Indian capital of Pataliputra that had been visited by Megasthenes centuries earlier. Faxian described the sinister mood of the Gobi desert: "There are neither birds above nor beasts below. Gazing on all sides as far as the eye can reach in order to mark the track, no guidance is to be obtained, save from the rotting bones of dead men which point the way."

Faxian commented, too, on the people he met at Pataliputra in terms that echoed those used by Megasthenes: "The people are numerous and happy: they have not to register their households, or attend any magistrates... the kings govern without decapitation or other corporal punishment. The criminals are simply fined. Even in the case of repeated attempts at wicked rebellion, they only have their right hands cut off." Faxian finally returned to China some 15 years later, accompanied by numerous Buddhist texts.

Over 200 years later, during the Tang

dynasty in AD 670, another Buddhist monk, Yijing, set out west from China. He, too, went in search of Buddhist teaching and texts, and his journey lasted for 25 years. He travelled from Sumatra to India and north to the Buddhist monastery at Nalanda, not far from Pataliputra and Bodhgaya, where Buddha found enlightenment. By Yijing's time Nalanda was a famous seat of learning, with studies involving not only Buddhist texts but also grammar, logic and Sanskrit.

Yijing stayed at Nalanda for 10 years before returning to China with 400 new Buddhist texts. He wrote of his journeys, discoveries and insights, describing the strong Buddhist communities he encountered in Sumatra, Java and Bali, arguing for the early support of Buddhism by the Indian Gupta kings in the late third and early fourth centuries AD, and noting the daily schedule of meditation and study at Nalanda. In many ways, he was an early example of a university exchange student. **II**

"No guidance is to be obtained [in the Gobi desert], save from the rotting bones of dead men which point the way"

An illustration showing Xuanzang (c602–64), one of a number of Chinese Buddhists drawn along the Silk Road route to India



DISCOVER MORE

TELEVISION

► Michael Scott's new series with Alexander Armstrong, **Italy's Invisible Cities**, is due to air on BBC One in the autumn

SPECIAL EDITION MAGAZINE

► You can order **BBC History Magazine's The Story of the Ancient World** at buysubscriptions.com/ancientworld



Michael Scott's latest book, *Ancient Worlds: An Epic History of East and West*, was published by Hutchinson on 1 July. Find out more at michaelscottweb.com. Michael will be talking at BBC History Magazine's History Weekend in Winchester this autumn – see historyweekend.com



BBC History Magazine's

History Weekends

7–9 October 2016
Winchester

**New
for
2016**

18–20 November 2016
York

**New
for
2016**

The Historical Trips Debate

Are we in Britain too fixated with the story of the world wars? Historians **Tom Holland**, **Alex von Tunzelmann**, **Roger Moorhouse** and **Nigel Jones** will be competing for your votes at our Winchester weekend.

**HISTORICAL
TRIPS**

The H for History Quiz

Test your historical knowledge by taking part in our quiz, hosted by **Julian Humphrys** and run in Winchester in association with H for History.

**H
FOR
HISTORY**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
Waterstones AND

**HISTORICAL
TRIPS**
www.historicaltrips.com

Book now at historyweekend.com* or call 0871 620 4021+

* **Reduced ticket prices for BBC History Magazine subscribers** → Turn to page 36 to subscribe today

+ Calls to this number cost 10p per minute plus network extras. Lines are open 24 hours a day.

THE SPEAKERS

● Winchester ● York

**Tickets
on sale
now***



Juliet Barker
● Fact or Fiction?
Mrs Gaskell
and Her 'Life of
Charlotte Brontë'



Antony Beevor
● Ardennes 1944



Tracy Borman
● The Private
Lives of the Tudors



Jerry Brotton
● This Orient Isle:
Elizabethan England
and the Islamic World



Paul Cartledge
● Democracy,
Ancient Versus
Modern: Ten Things
You Really Ought
to Know



Barry Cunliffe
● By Steppe, Desert
and Ocean: the Birth
of Eurasia



Jonathan Dimbleby
● The Battle of the
Atlantic: How the
Allies Won the War



Peter Frankopan
● The Silk Roads:
A New History of
the World



George Goodwin
● Benjamin
Franklin: British
Royalist to American
Revolutionary



AC Grayling
● Progress in
Troubled Times:
Learning from 'The
Age of Genius'



James Holland
● Burma '44:
The Battle that
Turned the War in
the Far East



Tom Holland
● Æthelstan
and the Making
of England



Tristram Hunt
● Ten Cities that
Made an Empire



Anna Keay
● The Last
Royal Rebel



Ryan Lavelle
● Cnut the
Great and his
English Kingdom



Suzannah Lipscomb
● Leadership
Lessons from
the Tudors



Andrew Lowrie
● Stalin's
Englishman:
The Lives of
Guy Burgess



Philip Mansel
● Aleppo: from
World City to
Ghost City



Giles Milton
● The Ministry of
Ungentlemanly
Warfare: Churchill's
Mavericks, Plotting
Hitler's Defeat



Marc Morris
● The Norman
Conquest: Why Did
it Matter?
● A Great and Terrible
King: Edward I and the
Forging of Britain



John Julius Norwich
● Four Princes: Henry
VIII, Francis I, Charles V,
Suleiman the Magnificent
and the Obsessions that
Forged the Renaissance



David Olusoga
● A Black History
of Britain



Joanne Paul
● 10 Myths
about Thomas More



Janina Ramirez
● Medieval
Mysticism: Seeing
the World in a
Hazelnut



David Reynolds
● The Great War:
What We Remember
- and Forget



Julian D Richards
● The Viking Great
Army and the Making
of England



Fern Riddell
● How To
Please Your Wife:
A Victorian Guide
to Love, Sex, and
Marriage



Michael Scott
● Ancient Worlds:
Linking East and
West



Simon Sebag Montefiore
● The Romanovs:
1613-1918 - Ivan the
Terrible to Stalin
and Peter the Great
to Putin



James Sharpe
● Why Did We Stop
Punishing Criminals
in Public?



Chris Skidmore
● Richard III:
Brother, Protector,
King: Why did
Richard Decide to
Seize the Throne?



Dan Snow
● The Battle of
the Somme



Alex von Tunzelmann
● Blood and
Sand: Suez, Hungary,
and 16 Days that
Shook the World



Alexander Watson
● Ring of Steel:
Germany and
Austria-Hungary at
War, 1914-1918



Michael Wood
● Alfred of Wessex:
The Greatest Briton?
● Searching for
Shakespeare

For full programme, talk timings, speaker details and tickets head to historyweekend.com



/historyextra



@historyextra

This BBC History Magazine event is held under licence from BBC Worldwide, who fund new BBC programmes.



Emil Zátopek surges to victory in the 5,000 metres at the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, ahead of France's Alain Mimoun and West German Herbert Schade

THE RUNNING REVOLUTIONARY

Czech athlete Emil Zátopek's extraordinary feats on the running track made him a global superstar. But, as **Richard Askwith** reveals, Zátopek's political activism set him at loggerheads with his nation's communist authorities

The crowds at Helsinki's new airport were overwhelming. On 10 July 1952 – nine days before the opening of the XV Olympic Games – some 10,000 people had turned out to welcome the world's most famous athlete to Finland. But there was a problem: when the Czechoslovak team disembarked their plane, Captain Emil Zátopek was not among them.

Zátopek, a 29-year-old army officer, was a runner of mesmerising ability and international celebrity. He had burst on to the world stage at the London Olympics four years earlier with a crushing victory at 10,000 metres and a dramatic half-stride defeat at 5,000 metres; since then, he had become a figure of irresistible dominance. He had never been defeated over 10,000 metres and was all but unbeatable over 5,000.

His nickname – the Czech Locomotive – reflected his seemingly inhuman indifference to pain. The rigour of his training sessions was legendary; in the words of one expert, he “completely upset all previous notions of the limits of human endurance”. Helsinki was his appointment with destiny: a chance to achieve the elusive distance running double of golds at 5,000 metres and 10,000 metres, and to establish himself beyond doubt as the greatest runner of his generation.

Yet now, when his hour had come, he hadn't turned up.

Journalists were told that Zátopek had tonsillitis. In fact he was in Prague, engaged in a game of high-stakes ‘chicken’ with the communist authorities that could easily have resulted in him being sent to a labour camp. A teammate, Stanislav Jungwirth, had been dropped at the last minute for political reasons: his father had been caught distributing subversive literature. Zátopek was outraged. If his friend did not fly to Helsinki, he announced, nor would he.

The stand-off continued for at least a day, possibly longer. The plane flew without both athletes. Eventually, Zátopek was escorted to the Ministry of Defence where, to his surprise, he was not arrested but presented with his travel papers and a reinstated Jungwirth. The pair

flew to Helsinki – and by the end of the month Zátopek had achieved sporting immortality.

There is no other word for it. It wasn't just his unprecedented, never-to-be-repeated haul of all three distance running golds (he threw in the marathon, which he had never run before, as a kind of afterthought). It was the charm with which he won them. The Helsinki Games were the most politicised in Olympic history, with the Soviet Union insisting on a separate athletes' village for communist bloc nations. Zátopek made a nonsense of such divisions. He was extravagantly courteous to westerners, exchanging gifts, sharing training secrets, joking with journalists in their own languages. As one Australian coach (to whom Zátopek actually gave up his bed when he outstayed his welcome in the communist village) observed, such good will made it “seem preposterous that we should ever be required to hate each other”.

“If he could improve his behaviour, he could be a good example to our youth” said one official after Zátopek **won his second gold medal**

Emil Zátopek holds a placard in 1968 declaring his support for the reformist leader Alexander Dubček (right) with the slogan: “Be proud, you who haven't betrayed”



When Zátopek entered the Olympic stadium for the last time, for the final lap of the marathon, it seemed that the whole world had been won over by his charisma. Nearly 70,000 spectators chanted his name in rhythmic, spine-tingling unison: “Zá-to-pek! Zá-to-pek!” “At that moment,” recalled one of them, Juan Antonio Samaranch (a future president of the International Olympic Committee), “I understood what the Olympic spirit means.”

Clashes with communists

For Czechoslovakia's communist regime, Zátopek's popularity was harder to deal with. Yes, he had put their nation on the map – but at what cost? “Comrade Zátopek runs well,” said the political officer at the team assembly following his second Helsinki gold. “If he could improve his behaviour, he could be a good example to our youth.” After news reached Prague of his third, a proposal for “the exemplary punishment of Captain Zátopek” was torn up by the chief of staff at the Ministry of Defence.

It wasn't his first clash with the party. A communist by conviction, with a life-long habit of sharing his possessions with others, he was individualist by temperament. In 1948, at the London Olympics, he had been ordered to miss the opening ceremony, but defied that command. He had also given his secret-service minders the slip to pay an illicit dawn visit to the girls' school where the female Czechoslovak athletes, including his future wife, javelin thrower Dana Ingrová, were staying. (He wanted to show Dana his latest medal. In their excitement, they dropped it in the swimming pool.) After the Games, he was denied permission to marry Dana, whose family was associated with social democracy. He threatened to leave the army, and the ban was rescinded.

More worrying was his habit of thinking for himself on ideological matters. His military records are full of scandalised notes about his “peculiar” or “incorrect” views. Once, he refused point-blank to inform on a fellow officer who was suspected of ideological unsoundness. In the fervid atmosphere of the early years of Czechoslovak communism – when failure to inform the authorities of any kind of political crime was punishable by up to 10 years'

imprisonment – such defiance was close to suicidal. Other famous athletes, including Zátopek's former trainer, Jan Haluza, had already been sent to concentration camps for political offences; so, later, were most of the national ice hockey team, arrested en masse on suspicion of disloyalty as they prepared to fly to London in 1950 to defend their world title.

Zátopek survived by picking and choosing his fights. He did not prevent his name from being used as part of the virulent propaganda campaign that accompanied the show trial and execution of the social democratic politician Milada Horáková in 1950. Nor did he refuse to report back to the StB (the Czech state security service) on his overseas visits, as was required of every athlete. Yet he pushed the boundaries when he dared. A gifted self-taught linguist, he knew that the StB's "sharp eyes" did not share his fluency. Team-mates attest that he often mistranslated the conversations he was supposed to report, disguising the warmth of his friendships with western rivals.

After Helsinki, Zátopek was all but untouchable, as long as he did two things. He had to keep winning – if he lost, he said, he feared he would be sent to prison. And he had to allow the regime to exploit his image.

With millions of Czechoslovak citizens still perplexingly unenthusiastic about communism, the Zátopek story offered a priceless opportunity to boost national morale. Dana had won a gold of her own at Helsinki on the same day as Emil's second, which meant that Czechoslovakia (that is, the Zátopek household) had won more track-and-field gold medals at the Games than any other nation apart from the United States. What regime could resist trying to claim a share of the glory?

Not only had Zátopek put Czechoslovakia on the map, he was also a class hero. Born in poverty, he had achieved success through the simple formula of spectacularly hard work. It would have been difficult to think of a more improving message to put to the Czechoslovak people, and Zátopek was conscripted to spread it. No public event – from May Day parades to the mass participation gymnastic displays known as Spartakiads – was considered complete without him.

The fastest figurehead

Notwithstanding his training regime and his military duties, Zátopek was expected to address factories, schools and forums, week in, week out, reliving his triumphs and sharing the morals he drew from them. One fellow athlete spoke of him being "chased from forum to forum like a bloated goat". Yet despite his private grumbles (for which he was reprimanded at least once) he was good at it. He had a gift for being glamorous and ordinary at the same time – rather like David



Emil Zátopek kisses his wife Dana Zátopková at the Helsinki Olympics in 1952, at which they collected a total of four gold medals between them – Dana won hers in the javelin

After his triumphs in Helsinki, Zátopek was all but untouchable – **as long as he kept on winning.** If he lost, he feared he would be sent to prison

Beckham today. People responded delightedly to his cheerful, unassuming personality.

Meanwhile, the Party's propagandists set to work. Official news channels recorded the emergence of a supposedly spontaneous "Zátopkovite" movement, modelled on the Soviet Stakhanovite movement, in which workers increased their output through sheer enthusiasm for Zátopek's achievements. As one writer put it: "The workers followed his example and set a higher pace for their work, in order to hasten the building of socialism in their country." In fact, the workers don't seem to have been given much choice in the matter.

The novelist František Kožík was commissioned to write a hagiography – 'biography' is too neutral a word for a life story told through a sometimes laughably crude ideological filter. Propaganda newsreels chronicling Zátopek's triumphs became familiar to every Czechoslovak cinema-goer, and provided raw material for an hour-long film, *Jeden ze štafety* ('One of the Relay'), stills from which also featured in lavishly illustrated editions of Kožík's work that were sold, with some success, in the west. The French communist newspaper *L'Humanité* was inspired to hail Zátopek as "the new man: Socialist Man". J Armour Milne, the Prague-based athletics correspondent of the *Morning Star*, was equally enthusiastic: "As a good soldier, he must obey. As a true champion, he must surpass himself. And, behind him, the youth of the nation follows..."

As his athletic career drew to a close in the late 1950s, Zátopek found himself used as a kind of sporting ambassador. His semi-official travels took him to India, Brazil, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Indonesia, Egypt and other destinations; his duties ranged from exhibition races and coaching to meeting, greeting and speech-making. Some people joked that Zátopek's hosts mixed him up with Czech president Antonín Zápotocký. It is not inconceivable that this was true.

But the travels added to Zátopek's growing political disillusionment, allowing him, as he put it, to "see the progress in the world – and return home to a country where time has stopped". Others shared his frustration. Growing pressure for reform culminated in the appointment, in January 1968, of a new first secretary of the Communist party, Alexander Dubček, whose programme of "socialism with a human face" blossomed into what became known as the Prague Spring. Zátopek was an enthusiastic supporter. That June, he signed *The Two Thousand Words* – a manifesto urging the reformers not to lose their nerve in the face of Soviet intimidation.

Communism by force

On 20 August, the Soviets responded. Half a million Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia, determined to restore hard-line communism by force. Zátopek was at the forefront of the protests, addressing crowds in Wenceslas Square, haranguing the occupiers in their own languages, and calling for the Soviet Union to be banned from the impending Olympic Games in Mexico.

In the months that followed, the reform movement was crushed: not savagely, but by steady, relentless pressure. Zátopek was among 300,000 people who lost their jobs. Expelled from the army and the Communist party, he was reduced to working as an itinerant labourer, living in a caravan far from his home and his beloved wife. His semi-official role as national hero evaporated.

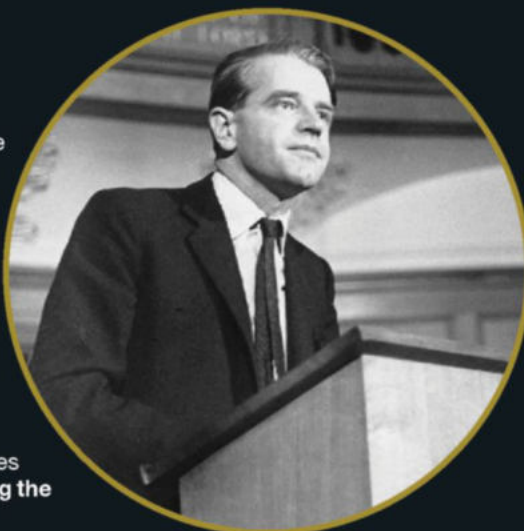
The disgrace hurt. He took refuge in the bottle. Eventually, in July 1971, he was manipulated into giving an interview to the

Power games

Other Olympians who made waves in the sphere of politics

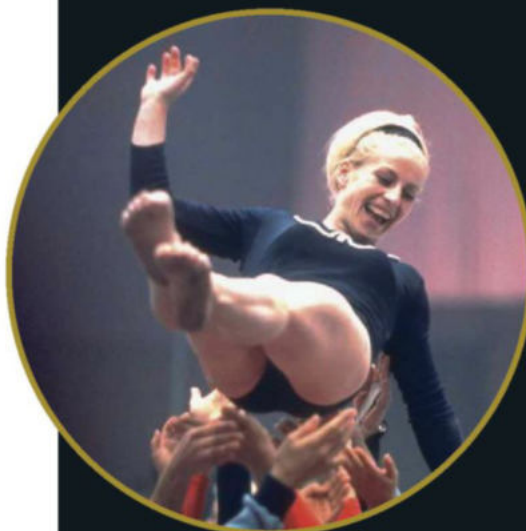
Sir Christopher Chataway

Zátopek's rival over 5,000 metres had more natural speed and grace than Zátopek but lacked his dedication. The Briton led briefly in the last lap of the 5,000m final in Helsinki in 1952 but fell after Zátopek had overtaken him. Chataway later became a Conservative MP, **notable for his opposition to apartheid and sympathy for refugees**, and served as a minister under Edward Heath in the early 1970s. Zátopek was his guest in the House of Commons during a visit to London in 1967. Chataway gave up politics in 1974 and devoted his energies into the charity **ActionAid** and running the **Civil Aviation Authority**.



Věra Čáslavská

Like Zátopek, Čáslavská, a gymnast, signed the *Two Thousand Words* manifesto in 1968. Then, a few weeks after the invasion that crushed the Prague Spring, she **won four golds (one tied) and two silvers in the Mexico City Olympics**. On the two occasions when she was forced to share the podium with a Soviet competitor she indicated her patriotic displeasure by looking downwards and away when the Soviet anthem was played. On her return home, she was effectively forced out of sport. After the Velvet Revolution in 1989, **she became an official adviser to President Václav Havel**.



Tommie Smith and John Carlos

Smith and Carlos won gold and bronze respectively in the 200 metres in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City – but their achievement was eclipsed by the gesture they made on the medal podium. As the US anthem played, **the African-Americans silently raised their black-gloved fists in a 'black power' salute**. The protest seems innocuous today; at the time it sent shockwaves around the world. **Smith and Carlos received death threats**, were suspended from the US team and were barred from the athletes' village. Back home, however, **the civil rights movement was reinvigorated**.



Party's *Rudé právo* newspaper in which he appeared to renounce everything he had fought for in 1968. By then he had also backed down in a messy libel action against the hardline communist minister Vilém Nový, and from that point onwards he seemed to give up the struggle. He gave evidence against the stubbornly reformist chess grandmaster Luděk Pachman in his trial in 1972, while in 1977 he was wheeled out to denounce the dissident Charter '77 on television. Once, he had preached that "one's willpower increases with every task fulfilled". Now he was discovering the dispiriting opposite: that each surrender makes it easier to give in the next time.

By then he was back in Prague, having been given a desk job in the documentation centre of the CSTV, the Czechoslovak sports federation, in 1974. As a political figurehead he was a spent force, despised as a turncoat by dissidents as well as by the hardline communists who felt that he had betrayed them in 1968. It was a harsh fate for a man described by one American rival as "perhaps the most humble, friendly and popular athlete in modern times". It also meant that, by the time he was officially rehabilitated in 1990, Zátopek had been widely forgotten.

He lived out the remaining decade of his life in obscurity, loved by his friends and worshipped from afar by athletics enthusiasts of a certain age. He died of a stroke on 22 November 2000.

Only now, 16 years after his death, is Zátopek's homeland beginning to re-embrace its most famous son. Every Czech athlete will wear a Zátopek symbol on their vest at the Rio Olympics – which will also see the launch of a new film about his life, backed by the Czech Olympic Committee. It is an overdue tribute to a man whose story – according to a later Czech-born sporting hero, Martina Navratilova – "reminds us of the pain and the glory behind every victory, and the power of sport to bring people together and make history". ■

Richard Askwith is associate editor of *The Independent*. His latest book, *Today We Die a Little: The Rise and Fall of Emil Zátopek, Olympic Legend* was published by Yellow Jersey in April

DISCOVER MORE

BOOKS

► **Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944–56** by Anne Applebaum (Allen Lane, 2012)

► **The Prague Spring and its Aftermath** by Kieran Williams (Cambridge University Press, 1997)

TV AND RADIO

► Enjoy extensive coverage of the **Rio 2016 Olympics** on BBC TV and radio





*Months that should be summer's prime
Sleet and snow and frost and rime
Air so cold you see your breath
Eighteen hundred and froze to death*

1816: The year without summer

Two centuries ago, Britons had to endure biting cold and driving rain from April to August. They blamed everyone from Napoleon to Benjamin Franklin for the filthy weather but, says **Robert Hume**, the real culprit was far more remote

ILLUSTRATION BY ZARA PICKEN

Our illustration shows a woman struggling through wind and snow in 1816. The rhyme is taken from a verse written to describe that most inclement of summers



Summer

Lake Geneva, 1 June 1816. An “almost perpetual rain” confined the small group of writers to the house. The night was stormy. In the mountains lightning flashed from peak to peak. In a letter to her half sister, Mary Shelley wrote: “The lake was lit up, the pines on Jura made visible, and all the scene illuminated for an instant, when a pitchy blackness succeeded, and the thunder came in frightful bursts over our heads amid the darkness.”

Shelley was not the only famous writer to complain about the weather in the summer of 1816. “Oh! It rains again,” lamented

Jane Austen from her home in Chawton, Hampshire on 9 July. “Such weather gives one little temptation to be out. It is really too bad, & has been for a long time, much worse than anybody can bear, & I begin to think it will never be fine again.”

The painter JMW Turner captured driving rain and red-tinged clouds in his painting *Lancaster Sands*, while Shelley drew inspiration from that “wet, ungenial summer” to write her classic novel, *Frankenstein*.

Shelley, Austen and Turner’s words and watercolour provide a glimpse of an extraordinary summer, unlike anything anyone could remember. People across the northern hemisphere shivered and sought

shelter as, for month after month, they were assailed by freezing temperatures and relentless rain.

Ireland suffered no less than eight weeks of precipitation. Nationalist politician Daniel O’Connell grumbled about the “dreadful weather... There is nothing but rain and wretchedness.”

Travellers felt the full brunt of these pelting rains. In France, Lady Caroline Capel was drenched to the skin from “the torrents of rain that here follow every day”, while in Switzerland it bucketed down on 130 out of 152 days between April and August.

It was also extremely cold. Ice four inches thick was recorded in Essex at the end of

Toxic pea-soupers! Five extreme weather events to strike Britain

1 The Great Frost, 1683-84

The Great Frost of 1683-84 saw the Thames frozen solid to a depth of nearly two feet. Londoners made the most of it by creating a frost fair consisting of shops, taverns, coffee and chocolate sellers, and even a brothel. Other amusements included puppet shows, carriage races and bear-baiting. James Chipperfield exhibited a menagerie of performing animals on the frozen river. From the week before Christmas until early February, the frost fair was the place to be. Charles II is supposed to have enjoyed a spit-roasted ox there.

2 The Great Storm, 1703

On 26 November 1703, booming thunder terrified southern England. Houses collapsed, and 4,000 oaks were destroyed in the New Forest. At sea, shipwrecks killed a third of the navy, and the 120-foot Eddystone Lighthouse was swept away. In Whitstable, Kent, witnesses described a ship being lifted from the water and tossed 800 feet ashore by a waterspout.

At his palace in Wells, Somerset, a falling chimney stack killed Bishop Richard Kidder and his wife in their bed. The lead roofing was ripped off Westminster Abbey, and at St James's Palace, Queen Anne was forced to spend the night sheltering in a wine cellar.

The Thames frost fair of 1683-84, shown in a painting by Thomas Wijck, offered everything from bear-baiting to brothels



August. Visiting London, John Quincy Adams was astonished to find fires lit in almost every house. "There has not been one night when a coverlet and blanket could have been thrown off with comfort," noted the future US president in his diary.

But in his country too "teeth chattered", as one woman visiting New Hampshire wrote. Although there were occasional mild days, the cold bit deeply. In Plymouth, Connecticut, a clockmaker still remembered many years later going to work, dressed in thick woollen clothes and an overcoat: "My hands got so cold that I was obliged to lay down my tools and put on a pair of mittens." Vermont saw 18 inches of snowfall in June. Farmers tried to tie fleeces back on to recently shorn sheep, but most of the poor animals still froze. On the bitter night of 6/7 June, when icicles nearly a foot long were reported, the feet of an 88-year-old man froze and his toes had to be amputated.

Not without good reason did contemporaries call 1816 'Eighteen-Hundred-And-Froze-To-Death'.

"The whole country is in a very disastrous state," declared *The Times* on 5 September 1816. Dead fish floated on the surface of ponds, scores of birds lay dead on the ground. Crops crumbled into frosty mush. Outside Maidstone, Kent, wheat and barley were ruined by hailstones "as large as nuts"; frost devastated hops in Worcester; and in Barnet, north London,

the livelihoods of haymakers were destroyed by the incessant rain.

Seemingly, nowhere in Europe was spared. It was remarked in Portugal how the unusually cool weather had "evil consequences" on fruit, making it unpleasant to taste. Switzerland suffered more than any other country. Both grape and grain harvests were ruined, and thousands of peasants were forced to beg.

Across the Atlantic, no corn could be gathered in New Hampshire and people in Vermont were reduced to foraging for nettles, wild turnips and hedgehogs.

Bread prices rocketed. In Paris a loaf that had cost 16 sous in the spring quickly rose to 32. The price more than tripled in Switzerland, and hostesses asked guests to bring their own loaves to dinner parties.

Riots broke out in East Anglia in late May, when labourers armed with pitchforks and carrying banners saying "Bread or Blood" marched on Ely and held its magistrates hostage. Banging kettles and blowing horns, hundreds of protestors gathered in Guildford in October, and demolished the house of a

baker whose prices, they said, were too high. It was not until November that the Corn Laws allowed cheaper foreign grain into Britain.

Some turned to emigration as a solution. Forty families from a Protestant sect in Württemberg, Germany set off for the Holy Land. During a single week more than 700 men, women and children applied to leave Ireland where potatoes had failed, wheat fields were black, and oats lay flattened by rain. To remain was to risk catching typhus fever, which struck down more than 60,000 inhabitants between 1816 and 1819.

As cold numbed the eastern United States, many farmers headed west. Wagons piled high with household goods trundled towards milder Ohio. Among those who left Vermont for western New York state was Joseph Smith, future founder of the Mormon religion.

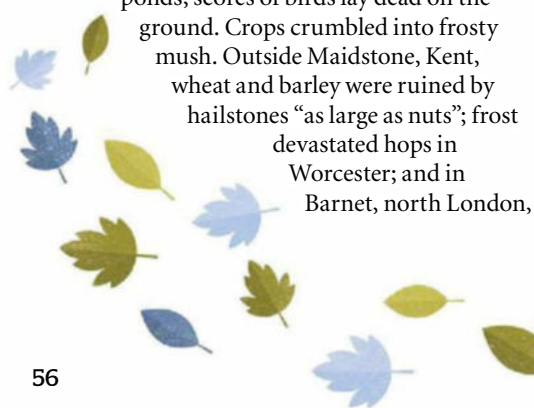
End of the world

The weather showed no signs of relenting, and the gloom deepened. Lord Byron composed his poem *Darkness*, while his fellow poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge made a bleak reference to the "end of the World Weather". As *The Times* tried reassuring readers that such prophecies were farfetched, 62-year-old Eleanor Saunders, a London servant, hanged herself in "a fit of melancholy".

For those living in 1816, these extraordinary events were baffling and unsettling. Something had gone seriously wrong with the weather. All sorts of explanations were concocted to make sense of what was happening.

Noticing a large irregular spot on the surface of the sun, surrounded by many other spots, some contemporary astronomers claimed that they were responsible for

Dead fish floated on the surface of ponds, **birds lay dead on the ground.** Crops crumbled into frosty mush





3 Avalanche in Lewes, 1836

Heavy snowfall began across south-east England on 24 December 1836 and continued over Christmas. In East Sussex, 20 feet of snow had accumulated on Cliffe Hill, Lewes, whipped up by the wind into a great ledge overhanging its western side. People were warned to leave their homes, but nobody obeyed.

At about 10.15 in the morning of 27 December snow plummeted down the steep slope towards a row of workers' cottages, killing eight inhabitants. "The mass appeared to strike the houses first at the base, heaving them upwards, and then breaking over them like a gigantic wave," reported *The Sussex Weekly Advertiser*.

4 The Great Smog, London, 1952

The mix of fog and smoke from factories and fireplaces that blanketed London on 5 December 1952 was unlike any 'pea-souper' the city had seen before. With no wind to disperse it, the toxic yellowy smog remained for five long days, killing more than 4,000 people. Transport was brought to a standstill. Pedestrians could not see their feet, and there were instances of some falling into the Thames. Smog seeped into buildings, and theatres closed because the audience could not see the stage. Prize cattle on show at Earls Court choked to death. Thieves had a "busy time", commented *The Guardian*.

5 The drought of 1976

With perfect blue skies and record hours of sunshine, summer 1976 was a time of barbecues, dips in London fountains, and long queues for ice creams and cold drinks. At Wimbledon ball boys fainted and 400 spectators experienced heatstroke in one day. Even Big Ben suffered metal fatigue and stopped chiming.

When reservoirs dried up, the government imposed a hosepipe ban. Householders were asked to use bathwater on their gardens, and to flush the toilet less often.

Britain appointed a minister for drought, Denis Howell, who was nicknamed minister for rain when, during his first few days in office, the heavens opened.

blocking out heat. A Bologna astronomer asserted that the sun was "ill", that it would become encrusted in sunspots and plunge the Earth into darkness. Although the greatest astronomer of the day, William Herschel, argued that sunspots were too small to harm the weather, the public remained sceptical.

Cold north-easterly winds, and large masses of ice floating in the Great Lakes were also blamed for keeping the air much cooler than normal. But a German writer put the cold down to a lack of gunpowder in the atmosphere following the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, which had enabled cold air to sneak in.

Even Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the United States, was apparently responsible. Franklin was an enthusiastic exponent of placing lightning conductor rods on buildings, so they could draw out "electrical fire" before lightning could strike. His critics argued that the rods had stopped the Earth releasing heat into the atmosphere and condemned people to perpetual winter.

The disturbance was ascribed by others to a higher being. "By the breath of God frost is given," mused one Vermont newspaper, quoting Old Testament scripture, while the *Missionary Herald* magazine went further to proclaim: "God has expressed His displeasure towards the inhabitants of the Earth by withholding the ordinary rains and sunshine."

Terrified by what seemed a looming apocalypse, people from Ghent to Gothenburg crammed into churches to pray for an improvement in the weather. In France processions were hastily organised to beg God's forgiveness: 80 young women paraded

through the streets of Paris in late July, holding lighted candles and praying for the rain to stop. But it went on and on.

When prayers failed, outlandish theories gained plausibility. English satirist William Hone found a sure culprit in the former French emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte who, after returning from his exile on St Helena in 1815, had invaded the sun in revenge for his defeat at Waterloo. The sunspots were nothing but shadows created by different parts of his body.

Pirates attack

But the real culprit for the weather disturbance was not a higher being, nor was it the fault of Napoleon. Shortly before sunset on 5 April 1815, a series of explosions had shaken the island of Sumbawa in Indonesia.

Local chiefs attributed the blasts to the spirit queen Nyai Loro Kidul celebrating the marriage of one of her children. British soldiers 800 miles away on Java mistook the sounds for cannon fire from ships under attack from pirates.

Over the next few days, the explosions gradually subsided. But around seven o'clock on the evening of 10 April, Mount Tambora, their true source, erupted again. This time the explosions were much louder. Cascading lava slammed into the ocean, creating tsunamis 15-foot high. Trees were torn up; people, cattle and horses swept away; houses flattened. The village of Tambora disappeared. Showers of thick ash began to fall, and by 11 o'clock it was so black, according to one ship's captain, that he could not see his hand even when held right up against his eye.

When the eruptions finally stopped some three months later, on 15 July 1815, around

12,000 people were dead.

Winds gradually carried Tambora's huge cloud of sulphurous gases westward, throwing the world's weather into chaos for the next three years. No one at the time linked a remote Indonesian volcano to the torrential rains and freezing temperatures across Europe and North America in 1816 – in fact, scientists didn't establish a link between volcanic eruptions and climate change until the second half of the 20th century.

In recent years extreme weather has provided plenty of material for Britain's favourite topic of conversation: sunshine to freak storms in just five minutes; hail stones as large as golf balls; floods regularly deluging towns. In the future, climate change might cause such events to be more the norm than the exception. Since an "effusive volcanic eruption" ranks highly on the current UK National Risk Register of Civil Emergencies, we might also have to suffer the catastrophic effects of another year without a summer. **II**

Dr Robert Hume is a writer and former head of history at Clarendon House Grammar School, Kent

DISCOVER MORE

BOOK

► **The Year Without Summer** by William and Nicholas Klingaman (St Martin's Press, 2013)

WEBSITE

► Michael Sean Munger '1816: "The Mighty Operations of Nature": An Environmental History of the Year Without a Summer' <http://bit.ly/YearWithoutSummer>

REIGN OF THE RED TERROR



In 1966, China's leader Mao Zedong launched his Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in an attempt to marginalise his rivals. In this he succeeded, says **Robert Bickers**, but at a truly horrific cost to his country

When Red Guards arrived at the door of Nien Cheng's house in Shanghai on the night of 30 August 1966, it wasn't an unexpected interruption. Throughout 'Red August', organised gangs of Chinese students had indulged in acts of destruction across China in the name of effacing 'feudal' traditions. Yet what followed still seems astonishing to record.

More than 30 teenagers stormed into the 51-year-old widow's home and began to smash it up, destroying clothes, antiques, records, paintings and furniture, burning books, and defacing walls and mirrors with political slogans. Nien Cheng herself was seized; she would spend the next six and a half years in captivity.

Her story was far from unusual. In Shanghai alone, tens of thousands of homes were attacked in this way, and many of their terrified residents were beaten to death or committed suicide. Red Guards also killed cats and other pets they considered a bourgeois affectation. Yet rather than being the work of a rabble, a lawless mob, this was an

officially sanctioned movement encouraged by Mao Zedong and his inner circle. It was the sharp end of China's Cultural Revolution.

By the spring of 1965 Mao, the 72-year-old son of a small-time landowner in south-central China, had held a commanding position within the Chinese Communist party for over three decades. He was one of its founder members in 1921, and had emerged as the core leader in the mid-1930s. After the party seized power in 1949 and established the People's Republic of China, he had stamped his personality and his programme on the politics and policies of the new state. In the late 1950s Mao had also come to assert his own claim to leadership within the international communist movement, which had split as a result.

Mao had long been the focus of a cult of personality. One of the era's songs – almost its national anthem – came to define his status. 'The east is red,' it began, 'the sun has risen, China has brought forth Mao Zedong... he is the people's saviour.'

But the 'Great Helmsman', as he was also called, was now worried about the future – and he was particularly concerned about his own legacy. It was Mao who, in 1958, had steered the party into a pell-mell race to



Red peril
A civil servant deemed to be a 'political pickpocket' is paraded through the streets of Beijing by Red Guards in 1967. Many such 'capitalist roaders' were denounced and humiliated

the future, a rapid process of agricultural collectivisation and a nationwide programme – the Great Leap Forward – to increase industrial production to overtake Britain's and match that of the US. The result was disaster: an estimated 30 million people died from starvation.

The colour of cats

By 1965 Mao had been forced to step back from hands-on leadership as more pragmatic colleagues tried to reconstruct the economy, though he remained powerful in his position as Communist party chairman. Men such as president Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, who managed day-to-day affairs, were also veterans of the movement, and no less ruthlessly committed to its goals.

Deng famously articulated his approach in July 1962 by quoting a pithy proverb from his home province, Sichuan: "It does not matter if a cat is yellow or black, as long as it catches mice." During the civil war of 1946–49 the communists' Red Army had not always fought a conventional struggle, he continued, but had adapted its strategy to the specific conditions in which it found itself. That flexibility had led to its ultimate victory. In restoring the economy after the ravages

of the Great Leap, the party needed to be equally pragmatic.

The cat would change colour in the re-telling, and became white and black as the phrase was repeated. But for Mao this thinking seemed to exemplify the approach of a new bureaucracy that was losing another, much more important tint: revolutionary red. Under the leadership of Liu, Deng and others like them at all levels in the party and state, the Chinese Communist party appeared to be in danger of losing its ideological purity and its political ambitions, instead prioritising economic growth.

Was capitalism being restored? Was the revolution being compromised by a new elite that had captured the party and government and sidelined him? These questions plagued Mao, who had also been shocked in 1956 when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had denounced and damned his own predecessor, Stalin. Was Liu Shaoqi the Khrushchev of China – and was Mao heading for the same fate as his erstwhile Soviet counterpart?

So the chairman sprang a trap – and everybody in China was caught up in it. He brought into play the young and the disaffected, and mobilised them to back his bid to restore the primacy of his own vision. In 1966, with strong support from the ambitious army chief, Lin Biao, Mao began a sustained

assault on his own party and the state with a programme formally described as a 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution'.

The spark that lit the touchpaper of the Cultural Revolution was a play – or, more specifically, a critique of a play. *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office* was a historical drama in which the eponymous chief adviser to a Ming-dynasty emperor was dismissed for publicly criticising the ruler. The problem was that the play came to be seen as an allegory for modern events.

A written critique was published claiming that the play was a thinly disguised

IN SHANGHAI, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF HOMES WERE ATTACKED, AND MANY OF THEIR TERRIFIED RESIDENTS WERE BEATEN TO DEATH OR COMMITTED SUICIDE

attack on Mao. The emperor clearly represented Mao, it was alleged, while Hai Rui was one of China's veteran leaders, former army commander Peng Dehuai. Peng had challenged Mao in 1959 over the disastrous results of the Great Leap Forward, and as a result had been disgraced.

Mao's opponents were charged with attempting to suppress the critique – which the chairman had sponsored, and secretly helped prepare – and then with having commissioned the original play as part of a bid to undermine him and the revolution. They were alleged to be 'revisionists', as Khrushchev was also routinely labelled.

The first victim of the movement was Peng Zhen, the powerful mayor of Beijing and Politburo member, who was toppled in May 1966 alongside other senior figures in the city. But, Mao and his supporters wondered, how far had this rot spread? The revolution was under attack from within, they believed – from somewhere inside the leadership. How else had someone as senior as Peng Zhen been allowed to act, if not without the approval of "Persons in power taking the capitalist road"? This description was a coded way of identifying the culprits as Liu Shaoqi and other senior leaders including Deng Xiaoping.

Few pieces of theatrical criticism have had such an impact. Between 1966 and 1976, an estimated 1.5 million people died as a result of persecution or in bloody, armed factional strife, and tens of millions would face political disgrace or have their lives permanently altered. Liu Shaoqi was toppled, dying in disgrace in 1969. The country was turned inside out, parts of it collapsing into civil war. The economy was shattered – it was better to be 'Red' than 'Expert', claimed the slogans – and China retreated into a morbidly violent isolation.

On 5 August 1966 Mao issued a manifesto calling on revolutionaries to "bombard the headquarters" and defend the party from a "white terror" launched against it by "some leading comrades". Answering his call with all

FACTION FOUGHT FACTION. THEY FOUGHT WITH LOUD- SPEAKERS, PAMPHLETS, FISTS, CLUBS, GUNS, TANKS. SUBURBS OF MAJOR CITIES WERE WRECKED

the idealism and passion of their age came China's young people.

Two months earlier, students at a middle school in the capital had formed a new revolutionary militia, the Red Guards, pledged to support Mao and attack his opponents. Endorsed by Mao, the new movement spread swiftly across the country as millions of young people flocked on to its trains to make political pilgrimages, to participate in mass rallies in Beijing or visit other sites of historic,

revolutionary importance and to "share experiences" with Red Guards in other towns and cities.

Bourgeois victims

For several extraordinary months China was turned upside down as its young people launched a wave of attacks against perceived enemies in the party and in every political or social institution. Those enemies were seen everywhere – including in the homes of the 'bourgeois' such as Nien Cheng in Shanghai.

The widow of a former diplomat, she had become manager of the local branch of the British oil company Shell, and had recently retired from a post helping to wind up that firm's interests. Nien Cheng had studied in the mid-1930s at the London School of Economics, where she had met her husband, and was a cosmopolitan, cultured patriot. She had toured Britain, speaking at meetings to rally support for China during the Japanese invasion, and she and her husband had lived in Australia for five years, where their daughter Meiping had been born.

Meiping grew up bilingual, like her parents; she learned to play the piano, and became a film actress. Nien Cheng ordered English books from a London bookshop, and stocked her pleasant house with wine bought on trips to the British colony of Hong Kong, and with valuable Chinese antiques. She employed three servants and a gardener, and had a cat.



Out with the 'Old'
Red Guards at a Buddhist temple gate, Beijing, in 1966. Such symbols of 'Old' China were relentlessly attacked during 'Red August'

There certainly remained a gulf between the cosmopolitan world of city residents such as Cheng and her daughter and that of the majority of China's people, who still lived on the land. Meiping had seen this first hand in late 1965, when she had been sent to live with a village family on Shanghai's outskirts, and had been shocked at the conditions she encountered. But a bond of solidarity had nonetheless developed between the urban sophisticate and the impoverished villagers.

Such ties were torn asunder in the orgy of violence and destruction that engulfed the family after 30 August 1966. In the custody of the state, Nien Cheng was subjected to 'struggle meetings' at which she was denounced and forced to confess to political crimes, and spent six and a half years in solitary confinement. In June 1967 Meiping was kidnapped, beaten, tortured and killed by a Red Guard gang.

AKG IMAGES/PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

The Cultural Revolution: 10 key events

1921

The Chinese Communist party is established in Shanghai, its founding members having been encouraged by foreign agents of the Communist International (Comintern).

1949

Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist government retreats to Taiwan. On 1 October Mao Zedong proclaims the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

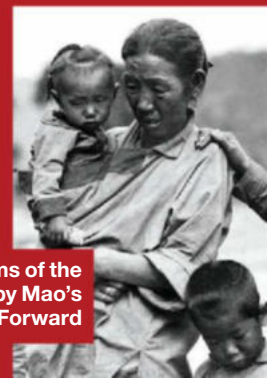
1958

Mao launches the Great Leap Forward with the aim of overtaking the economic output of the UK and matching that of the US.

1959–62

Famine results in at least 30 million deaths. As a result, Mao is sidelined by Liu Shaoqi, and some policies of the Great Leap Forward era are abandoned.

Starving rural victims of the famine caused by Mao's Great Leap Forward



1966

The Cultural Revolution is proclaimed in May. Red Guards form and, after mass rallies in Beijing, begin attacks on the 'four olds' and 'class enemies', 'counter-revolutionaries' and 'bad elements'.



Liu Shaoqi
Leader who instituted economic reforms but was denounced in the Cultural Revolution



Lin Biao
Mao's army chief and appointed heir, killed in a plane crash in 1971, allegedly after planning a coup



Deng Xiaoping
An economic reformer toppled in the Cultural Revolution, Deng returned to power after Mao's death



Jiang Qing
Mao's wife was a key member of the Cultural Revolution Group that came to power in 1966



Mao Zedong applauds a parade of Red Guards in Tiananmen Square, Beijing. These young militants followed Mao's call in early August 1966 to defend the party from a 'white terror'

The destruction of symbols of 'Old' (pre-revolutionary) China came to be a defining feature of the Red Guard movement. They attacked the 'Four Olds' – old ideas, old culture, old customs, old habits – pillaging temples and churches, and destroying the artefacts inside. They renamed China's streets, dispensing with 'feudal' names; they attacked and shamed people with western hairstyles or shoes fashionable in Hong Kong. One group announced that traffic lights should be re-sequenced, with a red light for 'go' – after all, was it not counter-revolutionary to believe that red meant 'stop'?

Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, formed with him a 'Cultural Revolution Group' that now seized power. She took a leading role in setting an austere new cultural policy that authorised performance of only eight model plays and 'revolutionary operas'. Foreign, 'reactionary' and 'feudal' music, art and literature were suppressed.

Disorganised chaos

Seeing the results of the 'red terror', Mao's adherents modified their endorsement in 1967, but the chaos proved difficult to control. All over China people realised that there could be no riding out this storm. If they were not involved, they could not win – and if they did not win, they stood a chance of losing everything and being damned for life as 'counter-revolutionaries' or 'black elements'. So faction fought faction to seize the 'headquarters' and defend the chairman. From 1967 to 1969 they fought with loudspeakers, pamphlets and posters; they fought with their fists, then armed with sticks and clubs; then they fought with guns, tanks and warplanes. Whole suburbs of major cities were wrecked.

As the country collapsed into civil war, Mao called on the army to step in, and Lin Biao's forces imposed order on the warring factions, often with further violence. A 'Campaign to cleanse the class ranks' followed; hundreds of thousands more were purged and many killed, as they were in further campaigns in 1970–72.

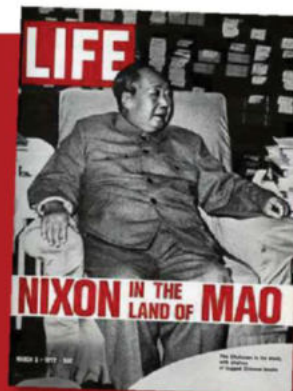
The Red Guards, idealistic heralds of the revolution, were brutally dispensed with, and millions of them were sent from the cities 'down to the countryside'. For most of them,

1967
Red Guards seize control of the Chinese foreign ministry, and storm and burn down the British Mission in Beijing. Mao starts to move against them, ordering in the army to restore order.

1969
Chinese and Soviet military clash on their common border. Mass campaigns are launched in China to dig air-raid shelters and prepare for war. The Chinese army suppresses factional fighting.

1971
Concerned about its international isolation, China signals its desire to re-open relations with the US. President Richard Nixon is receptive.

1972
Nixon visits China and meets Mao. Other western powers follow suit.



1976
The Tangshan earthquake kills 500,000. Mao dies in September, and the Cultural Revolution Group (aka the Gang of Four) is arrested. The end of the Cultural Revolution is proclaimed.

education had come to a halt in the heady summer of 1966. Though those days had offered unprecedented power and freedom – to travel, to criticise and to act – many of them came to find that their lives were wrecked as badly as those of their victims.

The course of the Cultural Revolution was byzantine in its twists and turns, but Mao Zedong achieved his core aims: those who he believed had been opposing him within the party were removed from office and disgraced. However, the violent energy that was unleashed threatened to tear the country apart, and order had been secured only by bringing in the army. In 1971 that order was threatened when Lin Biao – by then Mao's anointed heir-apparent – was killed in a plane crash in Mongolia; it was claimed that he had been planning a coup, but balked and fled, dying when his plane ran out of fuel.

The blame game

The paralysing stasis that followed the exhausting events of 1966–69 ended only with the death of Mao in September 1976. Within a month his successor, Hua Guofeng, arrested the leading figures in the Cultural Revolution Group, including Jiang Qing. Many surviving targets of the movement, including Deng Xiaoping, were later rehabilitated and regained power.

In 1981 the party issued a 'Resolution' on party history. This concluded that the beliefs of Mao that inspired the Cultural Revolution were "entirely erroneous" and "conformed neither to Marxism-Leninism nor to Chinese reality". Much of the blame was laid on Lin Biao, and on a 'Gang of Four' including Jiang Qing, though the responsibility of Mao Zedong was also acknowledged. Even so, it was famously concluded, his contributions to building socialism in China had been seven-tenths positive and only three-tenths negative.

Meanwhile, there has never been any meaningful calling to account of the perpetrators of the terrible violence wreaked during the Cultural Revolution. Their victims were rehabilitated – but the dead can never be brought back to life. **■**

Robert Bickers is professor of history at the University of Bristol and author of *The Scramble for China* (Penguin, 2012). His new book, *Out of China: Chinese Nationalism and the West from the First World War to the Return of Hong Kong*, will be published by Allen Lane in April next year

DISCOVER MORE

LISTEN AGAIN

► Listen to the BBC Radio 4 Witness documentary **The Cultural Revolution in China** at bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01r0b15



Conflict and kitsch: Mao's global legacy

The Cultural Revolution both appalled and enthralled observers overseas. As it first unfolded it was the subject of intense but puzzled scrutiny by expert China-watchers, but in the days of destructive rage in late August 1966, when reports emerged of Red Guard attacks on temples and churches, it garnered wider public attention.

Maoist rhetoric, and the style and iconography of the Cultural Revolution, were widely adopted across the radical left in western Europe, North America and Japan. Radical students in West Germany, the Black Panthers in the US and hard-left factions in Italy all took Maoism seriously as a political programme, though the established international communist movement remained loyal to Moscow. Mao chic permeated further into popular culture, with Mao badges, Mao caps and Mao suits worn as style statements, not simply political ones.

The Cultural Revolution also came to the streets of European cities with a series of violent incidents in which Chinese diplomats and students clashed with security forces in Paris, London and Moscow.

The most significant set of events outside China took place in Hong Kong where, from May 1967, local communists organised a violent and sustained challenge to British rule. By the end of that year 51 people had lost their lives in a series of violent confrontations, shooting incidents at the border and a bombing campaign. The British authorities enacted emergency regulations to suppress leftist publications, and several editors and journalists were jailed. In response, in August 1967 Red Guards burned down the British mission in Beijing, manhandling the diplomats who were then prevented from leaving the country for a year.

The Cultural Revolution and Mao's political thought had a violent trajectory that diverged from the course of events in China. From 1970, Europe faced the terror campaigns of the Baader-Meinhof gang and the Italian Red Brigades. In 1980 the Sendero Luminoso (Shining

Path) movement led by Abimael Guzmán, who had been trained in Cultural Revolution-era China, launched a bloody Maoist insurgency in Peru. By the time Guzmán was captured and jailed 12 years later, more than 50,000 were dead. A bloody 10-year civil war fomented by Maoist rebels in Nepal only ended in 2006. And the Naxalites, a



Peruvian children sit near school walls daubed with slogans by Maoist Sendero Luminoso insurgents

Maoist group with origins in a 1967 uprising in West Bengal, still present a significant security threat to the Indian state.

In China itself the Cultural Revolution remains in political limbo. The 1981 'Resolution' remains the public verdict, but there has been no detailed examination of the course of events, despite brief official endorsement of 'scar' literature, a genre of memoirs that emerged in the 1970s dealing with the effects of the revolution.

That openness did not last. Today, archives remain

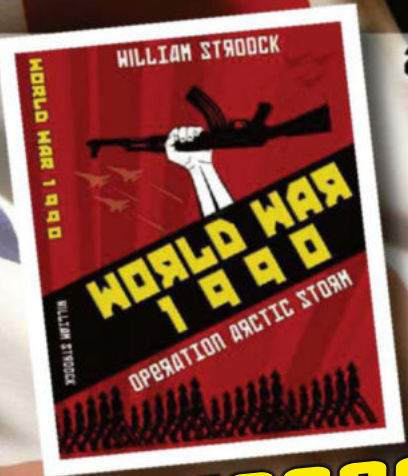
closed and most histories and museums gloss over or simply ignore the years between 1966 and 1976. At a grass-roots level, informal initiatives document victims' stories, but the topic remains so politically sensitive that there seems little chance of any loosening of political control. Most young Chinese know very little about the Cultural Revolution. The leadership's legitimacy today is grounded in its nationalist credentials, and in its handling of the economy. Its dark past remains hidden.

MAO CHIC PERMEATED WESTERN CULTURE, WITH MAO BADGES, MAO CAPS AND MAO SUITS WORN AS STYLE STATEMENTS, NOT SIMPLY POLITICAL ONES



A porcelain figure of Mao flanked by uniformed 'Red Guards' in a Beijing store in 2012. Often kitsch or ironic, Mao iconography remains popular today

Available from:
amazon



'IN A DIFFERENT 1990'

- AT DOWNING STREET, Prime Minister Thatcher urges the Americans to continue the war...
- IN THE NORTH SEA, HMS Tenacious hunts Soviet subs...
- IN NORWAY, the SAS mounts a daring commando raid on a Soviet held airbase...
- IN GERMANY, the British Army of the Rhine fights a massive armoured battle...

Its two minutes to midnight in World War 1990: Operation Arctic Storm

HISTORY & ART HISTORY WITH PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY

www.plymouth.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/ba-history
admissions@plymouth.ac.uk
 +44 1752 585858
 @PlymUniApply
 @HistoryPlymouth



Undergraduate History Courses for 2016-17:

BA (Hons) History (with minor pathways in English, Politics and International Relations), BA (Hons) Art History.

New for 2017: BA (Hons) International History

Exciting modules in British, European, US and World History include:

Regimes and Dictators; Twentieth Century European History; Victorians; Tudors and Stuarts; Early Modern Europe; Pirates and Piracy; Twentieth Century Britain; Modern Japan; Colonial India; Ireland from 1914; US Civil Rights and Popular Culture.

We also offer Study Abroad opportunities in the US and Europe.

Pre-register for Advance Clearing from 1 July 2016: www.plymouth.ac.uk/study/clearing

Next Undergraduate Open Day 15 October 2016: www.plymouth.ac.uk/study/open-days



MA in the History of Art: The Renaissance to Modernism

October 2016 – September 2017

A one-year, London-based, programme of ten evening seminars and an individual research-project, offering an overview of Western art from the Renaissance to the late 20th century, with lectures by a series of internationally acclaimed art historians, artists, and gallerists.

Others wishing to attend the seminars, but not intending to take the MA degree, may join the course as Associate Students at a reduced fee.

Each seminar takes place in central London and is followed by a dinner during which participants can engage in a general discussion with the guest expert on the issues raised by the seminar.

Examination is by a research dissertation, on an approved art history topic chosen by the student, of not less than 20,000 words.

Lecturers for 2016/17 include:

Martin Kemp
MaryAnne Stevens
Richard Cork
Martin Gayford

Course enquiries and applications:

Claire Prendergast
 Humanities Research Institute
 University of Buckingham
 Tel. 01280 820204
 or via email to the
 Course Director, Michael Prodger:
michael.prodger@buckingham.ac.uk



THE UNIVERSITY OF
BUCKINGHAM

LONDON PROGRAMMES

BBC COUNTRYFILE LIVE

Blenheim Palace
4 - 7 Aug 2016

Sponsored by
 **QUILTER
CHEVIOT**
INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

In association with
 **National Trust**

ADVANCE
TICKETS
£24*

FAMILY AND
CONCESSION RATES
AVAILABLE



“The greatest new day out this summer!”

Adam Henson

SO MUCH TO SEE, EXPERIENCE & BUY

JOIN THE COUNTRYFILE PRESENTERS • DISCOVER ADAM'S FARM • WILD ANIMALS & RARE BREEDS • LIVE MUSIC
THE NATIONAL TRUST THEATRE • OUTDOOR FUN FOR KIDS • 4x4 OFF ROAD EXPERIENCE • CRAFTS IN ACTION
LATEST FARM MACHINERY DISPLAYS • LIVESTOCK SHOWS • CANOEING & KAYAKING • ANGLING & FLY FISHING
COUNTRY SHOPPING FROM OVER 600 EXHIBITORS • GUN DOG DISPLAYS • DELICIOUS FOOD & DRINK
AND MUCH MORE...

BOOK IN ADVANCE AND SAVE AT **COUNTRYFILELIVE.COM** | **0844 249 1000**

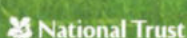
Calls to this number will cost 7p per minute, plus your telephone company's access charge. Please consult your telephone provider for further details.
*Ticket price plus booking and transaction fees.



Official Magazine



Theatre presented by



4x4 feature sponsor



The Big Barn sponsor



The Village Green sponsor



Food Heroes Kitchen sponsor



#countryfilive



BBC logo © 1996. Countryfile Live logo © BBC 2015

LISTEN
TO MORE
FROM THIS
INTERVIEW
on our
podcast

Experts discuss and review the latest history releases

BOOKS



Anne Sebba photographed in central London. "The word 'collaborate' can mean several different things. I've tried at every stage to show the light and the dark"

Photography by
Helen Atkinson

INTERVIEW / ANNE SEBBA

"Women were doing things just as brave and dangerous as the men"

Anne Sebba talks to **Matt Elton** about her book exploring the stories of 1940s Parisian women – resistance members, collaborators and those simply trying to survive in an occupied city

PROFILE ANNE SEBBA

Having studied history at King's College London, Sebba joined Reuters as a foreign correspondent based in London and Rome. She has presented documentaries on BBC radio and written for publications such as *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph*. Her previous books include *That Woman: The Life of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2011).

IN CONTEXT

Following the defeat of France by German forces early in the Second World War, Paris was occupied from 1940–44. The absence of men from the city, many of whom had left to fight, meant that it was often women who had to make day-to-day decisions on how to respond to the occupiers. Some were involved in active resistance, some in minor acts of defiance and others in collaboration. After the liberation, many women of coll ration received demeaning punishments.

Why do you think that this story has been under-served in previous books?

Women did not want to speak about their experiences after the war: they just wanted to get on with things and to try to construct as normal a life as possible. The liberation of Paris was in 1944, but the rest of Europe had another eight months to go, so by the time the war was over, Paris had got used to being free of its occupiers.

There was also a feeling that women hadn't behaved in the resistance in the way that the men had. I argue strongly that they had, because they did all sorts of extraordinary things. I've met women who said "oh, I really did nothing, I just pushed a pram with a hand grenade in it" or "I delivered leaflets and had the Germans caught me, they would have treated me like a spy – but it was really nothing". Because women weren't regarded as having carried weapons, they weren't judged after the war as combatants. That's a really important word: 'combatants', those who had been part of an organised resistance group, were given more medals and honour. I argue that women *did* carry weapons, but that they also took part in other forms of resistance. It's taken a long time for people to recognise that women were doing things just as brave and dangerous as the men were.

Was it evident early on that women would be central to the war?

Not at all. France thought that it would be a short war and that it would be victorious. So women thought that men would be away fighting for just a short period.

Things changed in 1940 once the Germans occupied Paris. People were terrified of the idea of the city being occupied and there was a great exodus when many tried to get out. But the Germans were so charming at the

start: they sent their most cultured and handsome soldiers, who behaved incredibly well to the women. It was really only after the Germans occupied the whole of France in 1942 [taking over the Vichy controlled territory in the south], and following the reprisals to the resistance movement that happened, that women recognised they had a role to play. They had to decide how they were going to confront the occupiers: should they stay in a café if a German walked in, or leave? Should they carry on in their job, even if it was indirectly helping the Germans?

Do you think the Vichy government's attitude towards women led some to become members of the resistance?

The exaggerated emphasis on glorifying mothers for staying at home, trusting in the Germans and going to school to learn things such as cookery certainly antagonised a lot of women who had fought hard for their freedoms. But don't forget that women in France did not have the vote at this point. Married women couldn't get jobs without permission from their husband or father. They weren't, according to the law, allowed to wear trousers. So, of course, many women thought that these laws were so ridiculous that they just had to act.

They might not have joined what we know of as 'the resistance', but they resisted in some way. That's what I've tried to make clear: that resistance took many forms, and could be anything from walking out of a café to hiding a Jewish friend. Many actions didn't necessarily fall into the category of 'the resistance' but were definitely resisting.

Your book's title, *Les Parisiennes*, is a phrase often linked to fashion – but that's not the whole story, is it?

It's far from the whole story, but it is a thread that needs to be understood. Fashion kept a lot of women alive: there were thousands

working in little attics around the city who wouldn't have survived had Hitler succeeded in his ambition of moving the fashion industry to Germany.

French women were also determined to remain fashionable as a way of not giving into the Germans. Even when they couldn't buy leather for shoes and had to wear cork-soled wedges, for instance, they covered them because they thought it was a way of showing the Germans they wouldn't be humiliated. They thought it was terribly important for their sense of self-respect.

What was the atmosphere in Paris at the start of the occupation?

There were no cars, so people went everywhere on bikes. Food shortages started to bite, and there were daily queues, sometimes for up to four hours. On Sundays, people might go out to the countryside and come back with cabbages or black-market goods.

One interview that really brought home the atmosphere was with Jacqueline Marié, who delivered political posters. She told me that coming out of a train was terrifying, because you never knew if there was going to be a round-up at the top of the station. If there was, the worst thing to do would be to double-back on yourself because it would give the game away immediately. So you had to move on to the next station by walking through tunnels underground, sometimes for two or three stations. You have to remember that these were teenage kids, too. That visceral fear in the gut of your stomach is something that subsequent generations have thankfully grown up not knowing.

Paris became a significantly feminised city. There *were* a few men: if they were Jewish they were in hiding or perhaps in the resistance, but they weren't out on the streets during the day. So it was women who had to interact with the Germans, to decide how they were going to feed their children and look after their elderly parents. These choices were constant and fell almost exclusively upon women.

So you would argue that women still had 'choices', then?

'Choice' was the word that I had in the foreground of my mind while I was writing the book. Some might argue that it's all very well for me to have that idea in the comfort of my study, but I think that even though an

"How to interact with the Germans was a choice that fell almost exclusively upon women"



A French woman fights back against Nazi occupiers on the streets of Paris, August 1944. The preceding years of the war largely featured less active opposition but, argues Anne Sebba, “resistance took many forms” during the conflict

evil regime such as the Nazis can take your food, your clothes and your identity, they can't take your inner freedom, your decision of how you're going to behave and respond.

I asked one of my Jewish interviewees about the choice that his mother had made to pay a woman to take her children to a place of safety. It struck me that this was the most courageous choice a mother could make, so I asked him if he had ever talked to her after the war about the 'choice' she had made. He looked at me as if I came from a different planet – that if I could use the word 'choice', I clearly had not understood.

I persuaded him that I wasn't trying to be offensive, that I was trying to put myself into the mindset of his mother and thousands of others like her. He explained that, in his view, his mother had no choice because, by the time that she gave her children away, Jewish people were not allowed into certain parks or certain shops until late in the day: it was so impossible to be a Jew in Paris.

Yet even though I have begun to understand how impossible some of these choices were, I have clung to the idea that ultimately, even in an internment camp, one could find a choice about how to think and behave.

How then should we understand women who collaborated?

The word 'collaborate' can mean several different things, and I've tried at every stage to show the light and the dark. For instance, one of the employees of the French national theatre resigned on the first day because she

couldn't bear to work in a theatre in which Jews were not allowed to perform. At the same time there were actors who continued acting, and I don't think it's for me to judge them as having 'collaborated'. They did what they needed to do because that was their job.

At the opera, meanwhile, Germaine Lubin was a Wagnerian soloist who you could say collaborated because she performed to a specifically German audience. What else could she have done though? It's difficult to imagine how she would have earned a living had she not performed on stage.

There was a very gendered response to how 'collaborators' were judged after the war. Girls who may have had a romantic entanglement with a German soldier had their heads shaved and were made to parade naked around town. There were a lot of such cases, too: by some accounts, between 70,000 and 100,000 Franco-German babies were born after the war. That's a lot of *collaboration horizontale*, as it was called.

There's no question that women paid an unequal price at the end of the war. Men involved in trading commodities or the black market did not always face the same punishments: they had a trial, whereas many women were judged guilty even without one.

How would you like this book to change readers' views of the period and the role of women at the time?

I hope that people finally recognise that women played an extraordinary role in resisting. Of course there were collabora-

“There was a very gendered response to how ‘collaborators’ were judged after the war ended”

tors, and I'm not trying to whitewash that, but how women behaved is very complex. Some women gave up marriage to loved ones because they had to stay and look after elderly parents; some risked everything in order to resist; others had no chance to resist because they were taken to the camps.

Women played a deeply significant role, which is finally being recognised. They wrote books, founded newspapers, acted to help victims of torture and organised friendship groups. Women did the most dangerous things that they were allowed to do in a society that did not value them: women who had no political power whatsoever rose above that and just took action wherever they possibly could. ■



Les Parisiennes: How the Women of Paris Lived, Loved and Died in the 1940s
by Anne Sebba (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 480 pages, £20)

Gain a prestigious Masters in History at Birkbeck

Our Department of History, Classics and Archaeology is a world-renowned centre of influential research, consistently ranking among the top 20 history departments in the UK.

- The largest cohort of graduate students in the UK
- Degrees range from prehistorical archaeology to contemporary history.
- Modules cover themes in British, European and world history from urban life, gender and sexuality to science, medicine and psychoanalysis.
- Our graduates go on to become researchers, teachers, lawyers, archivists, curators, journalists and editors.

Contact Daniel Binney for further details:
d.binney@bbk.ac.uk or 020 7631 6268

www.bbk.ac.uk/history

London's evening university



© Mary Evans Picture Library

FIRST WORLD WAR

Charity and Liverpool's Home Front

Opens 17 June 2016

FREE ENTRY
liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

Museum of Liverpool

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

@museumliverpool
#homefront



London's Underground Railway
A history & appreciation of the Tube
12 September 2016 & 19 October 2016
Led by Andrew Martin

For more tours, visit martinrandall.com/london-days

*'We were promised delights and surprises
and we were not disappointed.'*

See London from an unusual viewpoint.

Spend a day exploring the capital in the company of an expert. *Martin Randall Travel London Days* focus on some aspect of art, architecture or history and are designed to illuminate and inspire.

Exclusive and special arrangements feature: from access to TfL's historic headquarters at 55 Broadway to champagne at the Savoy; a private organ recital in a West End church to lunch at Middle Temple Hall.

Tours include: *Shakespeare's London* • *The London Backstreet Walk* – from Hyde Park to The Tower • *Modern Sculpture in London* • *Arts & Crafts* – Red House to Voysey House • *Byzantine Glories* – Golden Mosaics in London.



MARTIN
RANDALL
TRAVEL

LEADING EXPERTS IN CULTURAL TOURS

Contact us:
020 8742 3355

martinrandall.com/london-days



A 19th-century engraving of King George III slaying Napoleon. Brendan Simms' book argues that "the UK's global status and influence have always operated within the context of a European system", says Joad Raymond



Better in or out?

JOAD RAYMOND is impressed by a timely look at how the UK's relationship with Europe has been shaped by centuries of history

Britain's Europe: A Thousand Years of Conflict and Cooperation

by Brendan Simms

Allen Lane, 340 pages, £20



One of the dichotomies presented to the public in recent debates about the United Kingdom's place in Europe (and in the European Union) is that between the European and the global stage. Should the UK's commercial, influential and moral ambitions be European or global? Brendan Simms' latest book shows again and again that this is a false dichotomy and that the UK's global status and influence have always operated within

the context of a European system. The UK has always had a distinctive role in Europe, and Europe in turn has always had a critical role in the global balance of power. Moreover, the nation's domestic politics have always operated with dynamics on the mainland in its purview.

Simms offers a detailed history of first England's then Britain's involvement in Europe, and vice versa, over the past thousand years. Fundamental to these interactions is the argument – forcefully made, but without jingoism – for British (and English) exceptionalism. This is based on the grounds of its early centralisation, its long tradition of relatively democratic political structures and the moderately benign process of political union

between England, Wales and Scotland. This process subsequently formed a model for the US and offers an alternative model, Simms argues, for the EU.

While rejecting a saccharine 'island story', Simms suggests that these political characteristics always made it an influential participant in European debates and conflict. Even today the UK remains exceptional, the "last European great power" on account of its economy, robust identity, national confidence and military capacity.

While geography plays a part, it is not because being an island provides a meaningful boundary to political identity and national concerns. Even after the Tudors lost northern France, the nation's defensive lines extended far beyond the coastline: in the 17th century they lay in the Netherlands, for instance. There was disagreement over their location in the 20th century: Stanley Baldwin argued that they lay on the banks of the Rhine, while Harold Macmillan insisted they lay on the Elbe. Nato's mutual-defence policy now places the eastern defensive perimeter on the eastern edge of the EU, running from Estonia and Latvia to Bulgaria.

Through the 18th and 19th centuries, opinions were divided on foreign policy. One side argued that UK interests were best protected by a powerful land army able to maintain a balance of powers in Europe and secure overseas shores; the other maintained that a maritime and colonial policy best secured UK interests by strengthening its position within Europe. From these positions we can trace the origins of the modern Europhile and Eurosceptic tradition.

Both positions sought to address the UK's place within a European system

The United Kingdom, Simms argues, is the last European great power



COMING SOON...

"From neolithic Britain to modern Vietnam, medieval England to the Middle East, next issue's books span a vast expanse of both time and space. Plus, I'll be talking to Alex von Tunzelmann about **Blood and Sand**, her new exploration of the twin crises of the autumn of 1956." *Matt Elton, reviews editor*

and to balance the structural weaknesses inherent within it. British foreign policy has thus long been Eurocentric. England was formed as a response to European pressures and the UK was formed with a view to influence Europe. "In short," Simms writes, "no Europe, no England, no United Kingdom, no British empire and no decolonisation."

Throughout the book, Simms indirectly reflects on the present condition of the EU, and the choice that faced the UK this June. The final chapter advocates his own position: that the EU needs to give way to a 'United States of Europe', a federal system of pooled sovereignty. Simms argues that

Simms advocates that the EU needs to give way to a 'United States of Europe'

this, and not the present confederal arrangements, is the only effective response to the problems faced by the EU. While Europhiles have long held that closer union would be the outcome of a long-term process, Simms argues that what is needed is the creation of a union as a singular event, followed by a process of adaptation. The UK should not be, however, part of that union. Instead the UK or Britain would form a confederation (without sharing sovereignty) with this new entity. This, Simms persuasively argues, is a development of Winston Churchill's position on European union and not that recently voiced by the 'Brexit' campaign.

There is no sustained consideration of the role of news and of pan-European communication in forming British identities, and this is a missed opportunity. Yet this is a fascinating, engaging book, which exemplifies how a balanced and mature long-term historical perspective might have informed present-day political policy. **II**

Joad Raymond is professor of renaissance studies at Queen Mary University of London

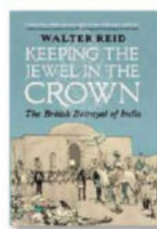
Out of India

DENIS JUDD considers a hard-hitting account of how Britain handled Indian independence throughout the 20th century

Keeping the Jewel in the Crown: The British Betrayal of India

by Walter Reid

Birlinn, 224 pages, £20



The British imperial involvement with India was the longest, and arguably the most significant chapter, in the empire's history. In the process, the English, then the

British, saw their role change from that of semi-piratical interlopers begging for trading concessions to that of the lords and masters of a whole subcontinent that they ruled with lavish ceremony and awe-inspiring self-confidence.

India provided Britain with a largely docile and extremely profitable trading partner, an almost limitless reservoir of fighting men, a military base from which to supervise other regional imperial interests and, perhaps above all, the international prestige that went with such a huge and grandiose undertaking. The trouble was: how would Britain cope with the loss of her Indian empire, which the apparently irresistible growth of Gandhi-inspired 20th-century Indian nationalism seemed to make inevitable? Apocalyptic predictions as to what the loss of 'the Jewel in the Crown' might mean to Britain were commonplace. The interwar political landscape was marked by the debate over whether to accept India's progress to something like dominion status or to oppose it by whatever means

came to hand. Even some members of the first majority Labour government, elected in 1945 on a huge mandate for change, were ambivalent about granting India independence.

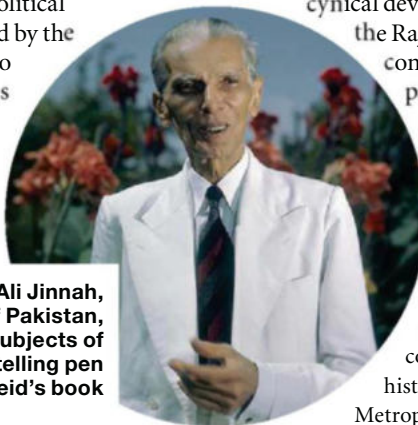
Walter Reid has written a thorough and hard-hitting account of the ways in which many British statesmen and administrators did their best to derail, or at least impede, India's progress to independence. He also argues that the bloody chaos of the communal massacres that so marred the process of independence and partition were substantially the byproduct of British reluctance to facilitate India's progress to freedom.

His research has been painstaking and comprehensive, and he has presented his case with clarity and sobriety. The book contains wonderfully telling pen portraits of many of the protagonists. We learn, for example, that Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the austere, intransigent founder of Pakistan, owned hundreds of suits, and that David Lloyd George said of Winston Churchill that "he would make a drum out of the skin of his own mother in order to sound his own praises".

An issue with Reid's approach is that it risks negating the work of countless Britons who wished to better India and genuinely pressed the case for its eventual freedom. Nor should we explain away the constitutional reforms that began in the Edwardian period merely as

cynical devices aimed at buying the Raj more time. History is complex and, at times, paradoxical, and the story of Britain's lengthy withdrawal from India is no exception. **II**

Denis Judd is emeritus professor of imperial and commonwealth history at London Metropolitan University



Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, is one of the subjects of the "wonderfully telling pen portraits" in Walter Reid's book



Soldiers at a Nazi rally in Nuremberg, 1936. Ben H Shepherd's book "shows with unimpeachable detail that the army was steeped up to its collective neck in blood", says Nigel Jones



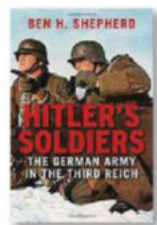
Blood and iron

NIGEL JONES has high praise for an exploration of the role of the German army in the horrors of the Second World War

Hitler's Soldiers: The German Army in the Third Reich

by Ben H Shepherd

Yale University Press, 639 pages, £25



In the 1990s, a travelling exhibition illustrating the war crimes of the Wehrmacht – Nazi armed forces – caused outrage in Germany. The army, its critics averred, was stainless, and any atrocities had been committed by others: the Gestapo, the SS, Nazi thugs or foreign mercenaries.

Ben Shepherd's highly readable history gives the lie to that and many other legends. The Wehrmacht, he shows with unimpeachable detail, was steeped up to

its collective neck in blood. Its soldiers participated willingly, and often enthusiastically, in acts of barbaric savagery against civilians, prisoners of war, communists, Jews and many other innocents unlucky enough to inhabit areas occupied by the Germans.

In analysing these crimes, Shepherd explains how such a conservative institution, priding itself on its upright correctness and Christian principles, could descend to such diabolical depths. The army had never accepted the reality of its defeat in the First World War and

Soldiers participated willingly in acts of barbaric savagery

eagerly embraced the idea that it had been stabbed in the back by cowards, Bolsheviks and Jews.

Then Hitler appeared, offering to salve the army's wounded pride and fulfil its hegemonic ambitions by tearing up the restrictions on its size and weaponry imposed by the hated Versailles treaty and boosting spending on rearmament. The generals fell at his feet.

In return for accepting the Nazi takeover of the state, the army would receive all it needed or wanted. For his part, Hitler agreed in return to curb the excesses of his SA Brownshirts and scrap any lingering socialist elements in his party programme, which alarmed and repelled the Prussian officer corps.

Once Hitler achieved the power that he craved, however, he went back on the deal by thoroughly Nazifying the army. Younger generals of humble birth were favoured over the traditional aristocratic Prussians, who despised or distrusted the vulgar Nazis. These men repaid the favour with fervent loyalty to Hitler.

Thus the Nazi regime broadened the army's base, freeing it from the ossified grip of nobility and making it a real 'people's army' open to all the talents and to new ideas of waging war. The downside was that Nazi propaganda and ideology came before military efficiency, which, coupled with Hitler's steadfast but stupid refusal to retreat, would cost the army and Germany dear.

Technically, the largesse lavished by Hitler on the army paid off, producing a motivated, highly trained force: flexible, mechanised and streets ahead of its enemies in its equipment and tactics. It was Hitler's insane overreach and Allied numbers, not any deficiency in ability or kit, that doomed Germany's army when the tide turned against it.

Shepherd has written a comprehensive history of the 20th century's most formidable fighting machine. It is also an unanswerable indictment of the moral cowardice and arrogance of an officer corps who sold their souls to Hitler and allowed him to lead them – and their beloved country – into the abyss. **II**

Nigel Jones is the author of *Peace and War: Britain in 1914* (Head of Zeus, 2014)

Louis XVI heads to the scaffold in this 18th-century oil painting. A new biography of the French king shows that he “faced his execution with a dignity that was often lacking in his life”, says Marisa Linton

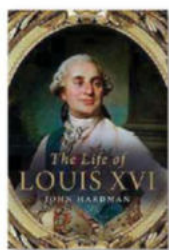
The fated king

MARISA LINTON rates a profile of the 18th-century king who was to meet a bloody end in the French Revolution

The Life of Louis XVI

by John Hardman

Yale University Press, 512 pages, £25



All of his life, Louis XVI of France was haunted by the death of Charles I of England – condemned as a traitor by his own people. In this revealing biography, John Hardman shows

how the same fate also fell, slowly but inexorably, upon Louis.

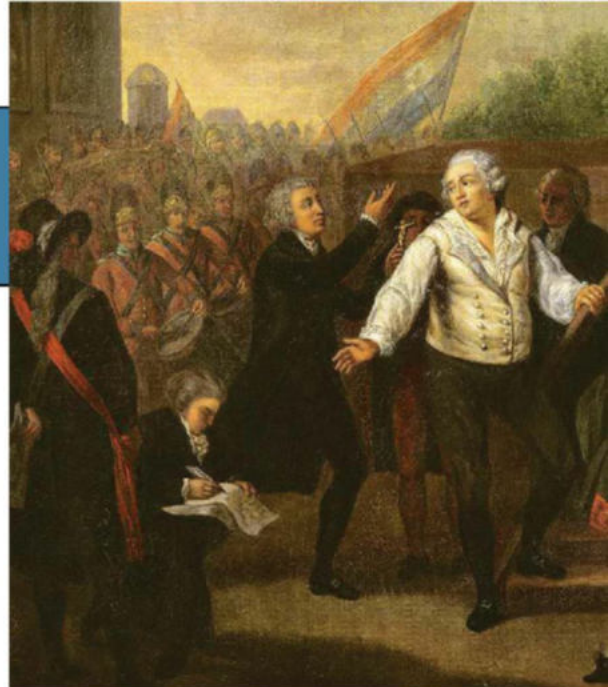
Louis was an absolute monarch: in theory, all power rested in his hands, yet his freedom to manoeuvre was constricted by the court at Versailles, a hive buzzing with the intrigues and factional interests of powerful nobles. All of Louis' decisions were taken in the shadow of his predecessors, the promiscuous yet conventional Louis XV and the formidable 'Sun King', Louis XIV.

Hardman has written the definitive study in English of Louis XVI. He reveals a man who was far from the lazy dullard

of popular legend. He was well-meaning, but his bizarre education and rigid court rituals stifled his capacity to think outside the box. He was painfully lacking in the initiative, resourcefulness and determination needed to halt the slide into state bankruptcy that precipitated the collapse of the old regime.

Hardman charts the complex twists and turns as Louis tried to oblige the nobility to shoulder a fairer share of the tax burden. But the nobles, suspicious of the king's ministers, convinced that the monarchy had been overspending and reluctant to yield their privileges, defied him. When Louis' attempts came to nothing he reacted by turning in on himself, becoming the 'silent king', seeking refuge in over-eating and over-drinking.

Hardman reveals a man who was far from the lazy dullard of popular legend



Like Charles I, Louis took no mistress; it might have been better for his political reputation with his people if he had, for his Austrian queen, the light-minded and incorrigibly reactionary Marie Antoinette showed poor political judgment, and her influence over the king's decision-making increased as the crisis deepened. The estates general, France's equivalent of a parliament, was summoned in May 1789. Louis hoped it would resolve the financial crisis, but the commoner deputies had other ideas: they formed themselves into a national assembly, which was defended by the people of Paris who stormed the Bastille. Thus, the French Revolution was born and a constitutional monarchy created, with Louis' powers legally circumscribed.

Most revolutionaries were personally loyal to the king and thought he was

Born to be Wilde?

ANDREW ROBINSON on the tumultuous tale of the Wilde family – and how it shaped the genius of its most famous son

The Fall of the House of Wilde

by Emer O'Sullivan

Bloomsbury, 495 pages, £25



When the 27-year-old Oscar Wilde landed in New York in 1882 to begin a lecture tour that launched his celebrity, he stated “I have nothing to declare but my genius”

to the customs officer. “He spoke the truth,” writes his latest biographer, Emer

O'Sullivan, halfway through *The Fall of the House of Wilde*. This seems a surprising claim for, as O'Sullivan herself compellingly demonstrates, Wilde's éclat owed much to his brilliant parents, talented family and tumultuous upbringing – more than is recognised by biographers or the public. Stephen Fry's jacket comment is perceptive: “This is a book that reminds us how very unlikely it is that a genius will be born in a vacuum: Oscar was, O'Sullivan demonstrates, every inch his parents' child.”

His father, the largely forgotten Sir William Wilde, was a surgeon by profession, but by nature a polymath. He was also the father of three illegitimate children and half of a sadomasochistic relationship with an erstwhile female medical patient, that climaxed in an 1864 court case alleging rape. This brush with the law was to foreshadow his son's conviction for homosexual offences in 1895.

Oscar's mother, Lady Jane, was largely self-educated, with an extraordinary gift for languages, publishing multiple translations of poetry. She and her salon in well-heeled Dublin, and later in penurious London, attracted an amazing congeries of talent, including eminent mathematician William Rowan

BRIDGEMAN



loyal to them. But Louis' decision to flee to the Austrian Netherlands border in June 1791 was the beginning of the end for the monarchy. Hardman argues that Louis intended to stop short of the border but, whatever his intentions, civil war was likely to be have been the result of so ill-judged an enterprise. He was intercepted and brought back in ignominy; his position never recovered. In August 1792 the monarchy was overthrown in a renewed revolution. Louis was condemned to death without delay or appeal. He faced his execution with a dignity often lacking in his life, as he was taken in a closed carriage, amid huge crowds, to meet the revolution's new invention: the guillotine. **II**

Marisa Linton is a reader in history at Kingston University London

Hamilton and up-and-coming poet WB Yeats. But she was also drawn to politics, and in 1848 she contributed a seditious editorial to a Dublin journal, urging the Irish to rise against their British colonial masters. She escaped arrest largely because she was a woman and well-connected. As O'Sullivan notes, she "passed on her itch to play with fire" to her son Oscar.

No one interested in the formation and dissolution of Oscar Wilde should miss this study. Be warned, however: it details the self-destruction of an entire family of gifted men and women, not only one undoubted genius. **II**

Andrew Robinson is the author of *Genius: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2011)

GETTY IMAGES

WANT MORE ?

For interviews with authors of the latest books, check out our weekly podcast at historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine/podcasts



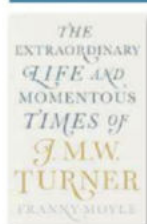
A man of his time

JENNY UGLOW *commends a biography of English landscape painter JMW Turner that vividly illustrates his life and times*

The Extraordinary Life and Momentous Times of JMW Turner

by Franny Moyle

Viking, 528 pages, £25



The 20th-century eagerness to see Joseph Mallord William Turner's work afresh led to the hanging of unfinished works and rough sketches that he never wanted to exhibit, as if they were as important as the finished works he cherished. In her fresh and lively new biography, Franny Moyle blames this for creating a distracting myth of a man out of step with his time and argues that he was, in fact, "profoundly the product of it".

Born in 1775, Turner was lucky to grow up at a time when a new thirst for contemporary art – particularly British art – was spreading, with the encouragement of the Society of Arts and the Royal Academy, whose school in the Strand he entered when he was 14. As Moyle tracks Turner from his childhood in a barber's shop in Maiden Lane to his final years in the run-down studio of Queen Anne's Street, where great canvases such as *The Fighting Temeraire* shone like suns in the cobweb-filled gloom, we come to see how Turner's driving ambition was indeed combined with a shrewd awareness of institutions, markets and networks – the demands of his day.

Yet he was perfectly prepared to shock people with his passionately experimental approach. Critics were confused and dismayed by his paintings of the battles of

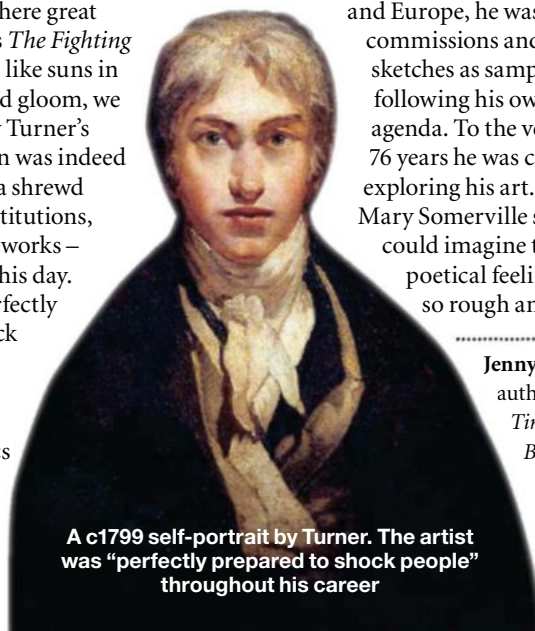
Trafalgar and Waterloo, so rich in humanity. His late paintings of storm and deluge, meanwhile, were damned as childish daubs: canvas smeared with colour, devoid of reason or thought.

There are no new revelations, but the familiar narrative of Turner's life is given vivid colour and depth as Moyle deftly interweaves his professional career with his private life, speculating about his erotic sketches, writing shrewdly about his liaison with Sarah Danby, the widow of a well-known musician, and tenderly of his final relationship with Sophia Booth in Margate and Chelsea. We come to understand his sociability and lasting friendships, as well as his prickliness and temper.

Moyle writes with sensitivity about individual pictures and series, and is good at explaining context, whether the internal politics of the Royal Academy or the various demands of patrons, from the early landed grandees to the new generation of wealthy merchants and industrialists.

However keen Turner was to impress these customers, his sketchbooks also show that he was experimenting at every stage. On his many tours of Britain and Europe, he was fulfilling commissions and accumulating sketches as samples but also following his own, personal agenda. To the very end of his 76 years he was constantly exploring his art. As his friend Mary Somerville said: "No one could imagine that so much poetical feeling existed in so rough an exterior." **II**

Jenny Uglow is the author of *In These Times: Living in Britain through Napoleon's Wars, 1793–1815* (Faber and Faber, 2014)



A c1799 self-portrait by Turner. The artist was "perfectly prepared to shock people" throughout his career

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE HISTORY EXPLORER

Your guide to discovering history in Britain and overseas



This compendium of articles from *BBC History Magazine* is your guide to enjoying history on day trips in the UK – and on overseas breaks too.

Inside you will:

- ◆ Find inspiration for fantastic heritage visits in the UK
- ◆ Discover thousands of years of Britain's past, with features on some of the key events and locations that shaped the country's history
- ◆ Get ideas on exploring history abroad, from city breaks to islands in the sun to exotic destinations
- ◆ Explore places recommended by expert historians, with tips on what to see when you get there

**ONLY
£4.80**
INCLUDING
FREE UK P&P*

Plus - subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* receive FREE UK postage on this special edition!



Visit romantic Fountains Abbey, dissolved by Henry VIII in 1536



Discover Penang in Malaysia, where east and west collide



Peek into Queen Victoria's holiday home on the Isle of Wight

Order online www.buysubscriptions.com/explorer
or call us on **0844 844 0250[†]** and quote **HISEHA16**

[†]Calls will cost 7p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge.
Lines are open 8am–8pm weekdays & 9am–1pm Saturday

*Subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* receive FREE UK POSTAGE on this special edition.

Prices including postage are: £6.30 for all other UK residents, £7.80 for Europe and £8.30 for Rest of World. All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery.

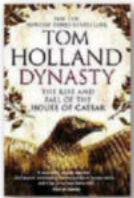
PAPERBACKS



Dynasty: the Rise and Fall of the House of Caesar

by Tom Holland

Abacus, 512 pages, £9.99



The story of the Julio-Claudians, two households (both alike in dignity) who oversaw the transition of

Rome from republic to empire, is familiar thanks to the writings of Roman court gossip Suetonius and the semi-fictionalised world of *I Claudius*. From these one can simply arise the five emperors as, in order: benevolent dictator (Augustus), diseased pervert (Tiberius), paranoid sadist (Caligula), lame dullard (Claudius) and egomaniacal monster (Nero). The choice for any modern historian is whether to accept these popular stereotypes or attempt to re-evaluate and reassess. Luckily for us, Tom Holland does the latter.

Holland is a skilful and engaging writer who expertly weaves his narrative between history, art, culture and mythology in order to better contextualise the Julio-Claudian family and explain the mindset of a society that believed in its manifest destiny “to pacify, to impose the rule of law, to spare the conquered and battle down the proud”. He cuts a clear, well-articulated (and frequently hilarious) path through the web of familial jealousy, intrigue and naked ambition from the rise of Augustus to the demise of Nero, taking in a whole host of central and minor characters. For those of us who have always found it difficult to navigate the complex personal interrelationships of the empire’s founding

dynasty, he thankfully provides family trees, *dramatis personae*, a timeline and copious notes.

The ‘great game of dynastic advancement’ remains popular, from the Tudors to *Game of Thrones*, but it was Rome’s first imperial family who arguably set the template for depraved and bloody excess. This is an excitingly visceral account of personalities and power games. Every great society gets the leadership it deserves; Rome deserved nothing less than the Julio-Claudians.

Miles Russell is a senior lecturer at Bournemouth University

The Kamikaze Hunters

by Will Iredale

Pan, 456 pages, £8.99



This rip-roarer tells the story of the British Pacific Fleet during the Second World War. Aircraft “barrel into the

unknown”; hearts “pound” as gunners take aim at kamikazes speeding towards

carrier flight decks; and gunfire “thunders” across the ocean. Based on interviews conducted by the author and the foundations laid by the fleet’s academic historians, Iredale achieves what few academics manage: a book that will both appeal to, and be available to, a wide audience.

It does this through skilful prose and a blend of strategic, tactical, technical and personal material. The narrative ranges effortlessly from combat action to high politics, the evolution of carrier aviation and the stories of individual pilots. The Fleet Air Arm’s struggles to recruit against the more fashionable RAF and inter-Allied politics are both chronicled. Iredale also documents the experience of fighting the Japanese across the vast distances separating the fleet’s Australian base from the Japanese home islands.

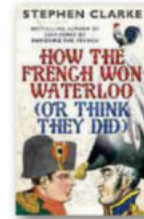
This is an excellent read and an important testament to a major British deployment that would have grown exponentially had the atomic bombs not brought the war to a dramatic halt.

Ashley Jackson is a professor of history at King’s College London

How the French Won Waterloo (Or Think They Did)

by Stephen Clarke

Arrow, 304 pages, £8.99



Of course, Napoleon lost at Waterloo, and France suffered regime change as a result. Few in France truly think other-

wise: what Napoleon’s considerable army of admirers more credibly claim is that he won the battle for history. Nostalgia for the empire proved enduring as 19th-century apologists nurtured the image of Waterloo as a glorious defeat. Indeed, the majority of those who visit the battlefield go to see where the imperial dream was dashed, many in a spirit of sadness.

Stephen Clarke knows this: he is not seeking to rewrite history. Indeed, he has made a cottage industry out of mocking the French, and here he writes with humour and a pinch of chauvinism of his own. By talking of Waterloo as though it were a straight fight between the British and the French he deliberately underplays – as Wellington did – the role of the Prussians in the battle, as well as the part played by Wellington’s Belgian, Dutch and Hanoverian troops.

But it is not to historians that this book is primarily directed; it is more an extended joke in a long Anglo-French tradition. When the historical detail is stripped away, this is Waterloo as stand-up, funny and caustic by turns – though some may feel that, over 300 pages, the joke begins to pall. ■

Alan Forrest is professor emeritus at the University of York



A first-century BC image of Augustus, a key figure in Tom Holland’s ‘visceral’ book



The midnight sun in Lapland, Sweden. Cecilia Ekbäck's new novel "vividly evokes the unforgiving world in which it takes place", enthuses Nick Rennison

FICTION

Magnetic north

NICK RENNISON is gripped by a compelling tale of murder and intrigue in a divided community in rural Sweden

In the Month of the Midnight Sun

by Cecilia Ekbäck

Hodder & Stoughton, 368 pages, £16.99



Sweden, the 1850s: geologist Magnus Stille leaves Stockholm to survey the mineral-rich Blackåsen Mountain in the remote north of the country. The minister of justice, the

man who has brought him up since he was supposedly abandoned as a small child, charges him with another task: to investigate the mysterious circumstances surrounding a multiple murder committed by one of the nomadic Sami people who live near Blackåsen. And he is to take with him the minister's wilful daughter Lovisa, who has been banished after her latest act of defiance.

Together Magnus and Lovisa leave the comforts of the city and journey to a small, isolated community of Swedish settlers amid the ancestral lands of the Sami. They find it riven by feuds between those born in the village and

those who have arrived from elsewhere, and traumatised by the killings of three of its most prominent members.

Set in the same settlement as Ekbäck's 2015 debut *Wolf Winter* (see right) but more than a century later, this is a story told by three narrators. Magnus clings to his belief in reason, even as the power of the past threatens to overwhelm him; Lovisa finds new strength of character away from the city and her father; and old Sami woman Bijja is at first an outsider watching the settlement's dissolution, but is gradually obliged to acknowledge her people's involvement in the tragedy.

Alternating between the different perspectives of these three characters, the novel moves towards revelations that leave none of them unchanged. Ekbäck has written a book that vividly evokes the unforgiving world in which it takes place. Above all, it remains a compelling mystery story, a historical Nordic noir tale of murder and long-buried secrets that grips the reader from opening page to final revelation. **II**

Nick Rennison is the author of *Carver's Truth*, to be published by Corvus in August

THREE MORE TALES OF SCANDINAVIAN HISTORY

Wolf Winter

Cecilia Ekbäck (2015)



This suspenseful, well-written thriller is set in Swedish Lapland in the early 18th century. Teenage Frederika, newly arrived in a small, remote community, stumbles across a man's mutilated body. Her mother, Maija, is puzzled by claims that he was attacked by a wolf when it is clear that he was murdered. Maija's persistent pursuit of the truth brings to light dark events from the past that her neighbours have long striven to hide.

The Strawberry Girl

Lisa Stromme (2016)



In the summer of 1893, the Norwegian fishing village of Åsgårdstrand becomes home to visitors from the city. Among them is the tormented and

bohemian painter Edvard Munch. Local teenager Johanne Lien, who models for the artist and is known as 'The Strawberry Girl', finds herself witness to Munch's doomed affair with the rebellious daughter of a well-to-do family in this poignant tale of creative genius and thwarted desire.

We, the Drowned

Carsten Jensen (2010)



At the heart of this remarkable, epic novel is Marstal, a small Danish town on the Baltic where the sea rules the lives of the inhabitants. Carsten Jensen's

wide-ranging story covers nearly a century, beginning in 1848, when a group of Marstal men sets out for war with Germany, and ending in 1945 as a motley crew of exiles steers a passage home through waters filled with people cast adrift by the Third Reich's collapse.



A British Housewives' League protester in 1945

Jonathan Wright previews the pick of upcoming programmes

TV & RADIO



Hearth and home

Archive on 4: The League of Extraordinary Housewives

RADIO Radio 4
scheduled for Saturday 16 July

Not everyone welcomed the founding of the welfare state. In 1945, the British Housewives' League was founded with a brief to protest against being "under-fed, under-washed and over-controlled". This conservative organisation (in its current guise it has strong links to UKIP), which worried about the state undermining women's traditional roles, enjoyed real political influence. Its complaints about the quality of meat, it's said, helped return Churchill to power. Jo Fidgen traces its history, reflects on challenges to feminism, and explores the idea of women as politically distinct from men.



Making History explains how Wren nearly destroyed St Paul's Cathedral

Forty up

Making History

RADIO Radio 4
scheduled for Tuesday 2 August

The history magazine show returns for a remarkable 40th series. Over an eight-week run, Helen Castor and Tom Holland will tackle a typically eclectic selection of stories. Expect reports on the relationship between the blues and the carnage of the Somme; how the Cold War shaped the modern geography of the Scottish Highlands; and the origins of farming. The duo also look at the history of tattoos and explain how Christopher Wren himself almost destroyed St Paul's Cathedral.

"[The show] feels fresher now than ever and just as fun to work on," says producer Nick Patrick.

Pop revolution

Jon Savage tells us about his documentary exploring how pop culture reflected British tensions in 1966

Arena: 1966 - The Year the Decade Exploded

TV BBC Four
scheduled for Sunday 24 July

There are years that represent a time when the world changed. As a new *Arena* documentary written by cultural historian Jon Savage shows, 1966 was one such year. Here was a world waiting to burst into psychedelic colour, but where news reports and TV shows were still recorded in black and white.

"I like the fact that it's stark," says Savage of the archive footage that makes up the documentary, shown as part of BBC Music's My Generation season. In part that's because Savage is suspicious of "warm bath" nostalgia and instead, both here and in his book, *1966: The Year the Decade Exploded*, uses music and popular culture as a way to show what was at stake. "[The music] wasn't created in a vacuum," he says. "Young people at that point were very engaged with what was happening in the world and were trying to do something about it."

In this context, there's good reason why the documentary features an obscure B-side by

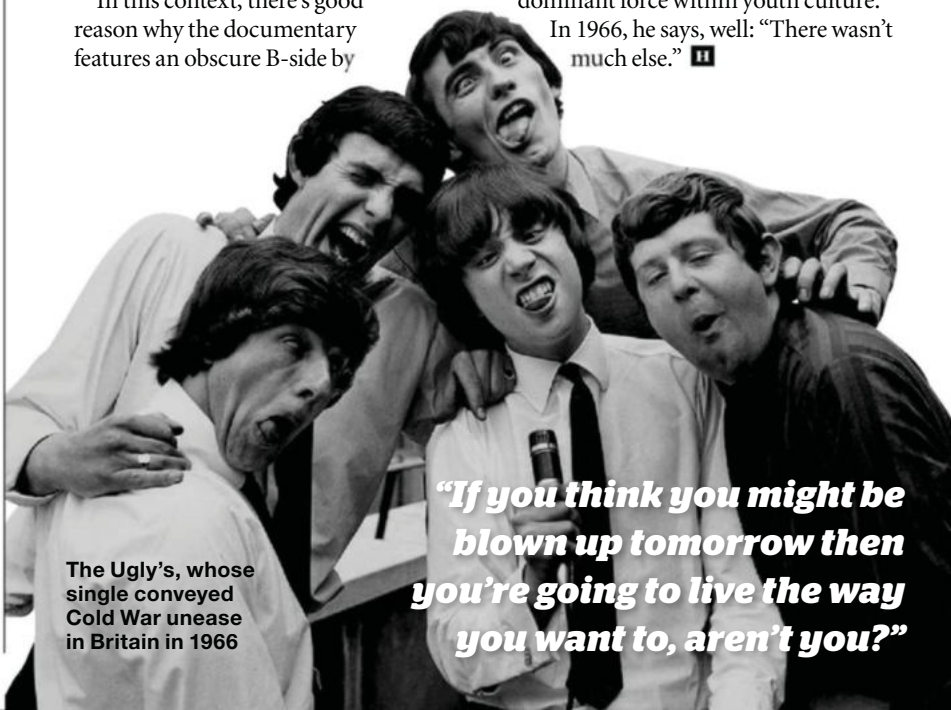
Birmingham band the Ugly's. 'The Quiet Explosion', released less than four years after the Cuban missile crisis, deals with Cold War concerns over Armageddon.

"The fear of nuclear annihilation, which was very present then but which everybody forgets about, is part of the rocket fuel that made the sixties take off," says Savage. "If you think you might be blown up tomorrow then to hell with it, you're going to live the way you want to, aren't you?"

Other factors included the influence of American popular culture at a time when civil rights movements were a vital force, and opposition to the Vietnam War was growing. Young people were more affluent and "a huge youth market" began "to flex its muscles". And then there were drugs. By the spring of 1966, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan had all taken LSD, and its influence began to pervade their music. That year John Lennon wrote 'Strawberry Fields Forever'.

As to whether we could ever have another year like 1966, Savage has his doubts. Today, music is no longer a dominant force within youth culture.

In 1966, he says, well: "There wasn't much else." ■



The Ugly's, whose single conveyed Cold War unease in Britain in 1966

"If you think you might be blown up tomorrow then you're going to live the way you want to, aren't you?"

Toby Jones stars in the BBC's timely adaptation of Conrad's work on chaos and radicalism



Anarchists in the UK

The Secret Agent
TV BBC One
 scheduled for July

In an era when the threat of a terror attack is all too real, the BBC's adaptation of Joseph Conrad's proto-police procedural-cum-espionage tale arrives at an apposite moment. Published in 1907 but set in 1886, the novel plays off what were then contemporary fears of attacks by anarchists and political extremists.

At its heart lies Adolf Verloc, played by Toby Jones, both proprietor of a seedy Soho shop and an agent for the Russian

embassy. Told to orchestrate a bombing by the anarchist group he's monitoring, Verloc finds them resistant to the idea and, shamefully, turns to his wife Winnie's younger brother, Stevie (Charlie Hamblett), who is mentally disabled, as an accomplice.

Scripted by Tony Marchant (*Garrow's Law*), the three-part drama also stars Vicky McClure (*Line of Duty*) and Ian Hart (*Boardwalk Empire*) as the unpredictable Professor, who can help Verloc source explosives. Verloc's adversary, Chief Inspector Heat, is played by Stephen Graham (*This is England*).

To judge by the first episode, it's an atmospheric adaptation that, without forcing the issue, doesn't shy away from contemporary resonances.

Picture this

Play On! Shakespeare in Silent Film
DVD (BFI, £19.99)

Shakespeare's works didn't only make it to the big screen once talkies were invented. The first known adaptation of a film based on Shakespeare's work dates back to 1899: *King John*, a short starring leading man and theatre manager Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

By the end of the silent era, hundreds of films based on the Bard's plays had been produced, and two dozen of these now rarely-seen works form the basis of this feature-length celebration of

silent-era Shakespeare. Highlights range from what was probably John Gielgud's first film appearance, in the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*, through to Lear battling a raging storm – at Stonehenge. In lieu of iambic pentameter, the soundtrack is by the composers and musicians of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

As ever with BFI releases, there are plenty of special features to add historical and cultural context, including academic Judith Buchanan's commentaries on *King Lear* (1910) and *The Winter's Tale* (1913). An illustrated booklet features contributions from Bryony Dixon (silent film curator, BFI) and Bill Barclay (director of music at the Globe).



A still from a 16-minute colourised 1910 Italian silent film of *King Lear*

WANT MORE?

We'll send you news of the best history shows every Friday. Sign up now at historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine/newsletter



Jazz pianist Marian McPartland, featured in *Girls in the Band*

In addition to **Arena:1966** (see previous page), there are plenty of other documentaries with a strong social history angle in the BBC's My Generation season, which this time covers 1966–75. Hosted by Danny Baker, **The People's History of Pop** (BBC Four, Friday 22 July) puts the emphasis on fans' memories of the music they loved, including the remarkable day when Bob Marley and Johnny Nash performed at Peckham Manor School.

In the same season, **The Beach Boys - Pet Sounds** (BBC Four, Sunday 24 July) charts the recording of Brian Wilson's masterpiece. Combining music, arts, culture, history and sport, **World Cup '66 Minute By Minute** (Radio 2, Saturday 30 July) revisits England's 4–2 victory over West Germany.

On Radio 4, **A Brief History of TIM** (Saturday 16 July) finds Lynne Truss telling the story of the speaking clock, while **Clap Clap: A Brief History of Applause** (Sunday 24 July) sees Simon Callow trace the story of appreciative clapping.

On Channel 4, **Lost in Iraq: The Great British Movie Adventure** (July) relates the farcical tale of how Saddam Hussein commissioned an epic film about the birth of modern Iraq, a project that had hellraiser Oliver Reed among its cast and went into production as the Iran-Iraq war broke out.

Girls in the Band (PBS America, Thursday 28 July) considers the often overlooked contribution of female musicians to the development of jazz music.

FROM THE MAKERS OF **BBC** **HiSTORY**
MAGAZINE

Classic Stories

The Second World War Story



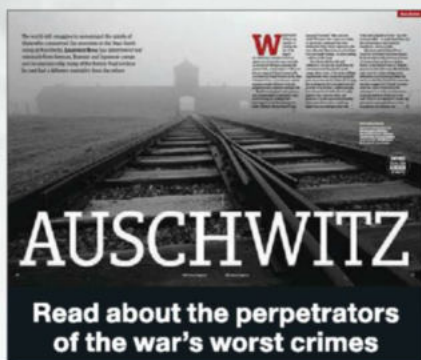
More than 75 years since the Second World War broke out, this collector's edition from the makers of *BBC History Magazine* explores six of the most momentous years in global history.

Inside you will:

- ◆ Read testimonies from British seamen, SS volunteers, Soviet agents and Japanese kamikaze pilots
- ◆ Find out why Hitler decided to declare war on the United States
- ◆ Meet the pilots and the planes that won the Battle of Britain
- ◆ Follow the tense hours that led up to the dropping of the first nuclear bomb
- ◆ Learn what victory in 1945 meant to the people of Britain
- ◆ Discover how you can find out more about what your ancestors did in the conflict

**ONLY
£9.99
INCLUDING
FREE UK P&P***

Subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* get FREE UK postage on this edition!



Order online www.buysubscriptions.com/WW2
or call us on **0844 844 0250⁺** and quote **WW2HA16**

+ Calls will cost 7p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge. Lines are open 8am–8pm weekdays & 9am–1pm Saturday
* Subscribers to BBC History Magazine receive FREE UK P&P on this special edition. Prices including postage are: £11.49 for all UK residents, £12.99 for Europe and £13.49 for Rest of World. All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery

OUT & ABOUT

HISTORY EXPLORER

The Cold War

Rory Cormac and Spencer Mizen visit the **York Cold War Bunker** to discover how Britain planned to respond to the nightmare scenario of a nuclear attack

On a warm summer's morning, there can be few better places to visit than York. This ancient county town is a gem, bristling with buildings renowned for their long histories and aesthetic beauty.

Unfortunately, the York Cold War Bunker isn't one of them. Tucked away in a quiet suburb a mile or so west of the city centre, this stark, rectangular, concrete structure will never thrill the senses in the way that nearby York Minster or Clifford's Tower will.

But then again, the bunker was never designed to be a thing of beauty. Its role was always grimly utilitarian – and that was to be the eyes and ears of Britain's authorities if the country came under nuclear attack.

When the bunker was built in 1961 – at the height of the Cold War – that nightmarish scenario was casting an ever longer shadow over the people of Britain. With relations between the west and the Soviet Union rapidly growing more hostile, Soviet bombs getting more destructive (capped, that year, by the explosion of the Tsar Bomba, the largest nuclear weapon ever to be detonated) and more and more of them pointed at Britain, the government began ramping up plans for protecting its citizens in the event of a Third World War. The York Cold War Bunker was an integral part of those contingencies.

Radioactive cloud

The bunker was designed to be staffed by 60 members of the Royal Observer Corps, all of whom would have rushed to the relative safety of the facility in the event of a nuclear attack. Yet these highly trained volunteers wouldn't have been here for their own protection. Instead, as Rory Cormac, assistant professor of international relations

at the University of Nottingham, explains, they would have had the grimmest of tasks – monitoring the effects of a nuclear strike on the York region.

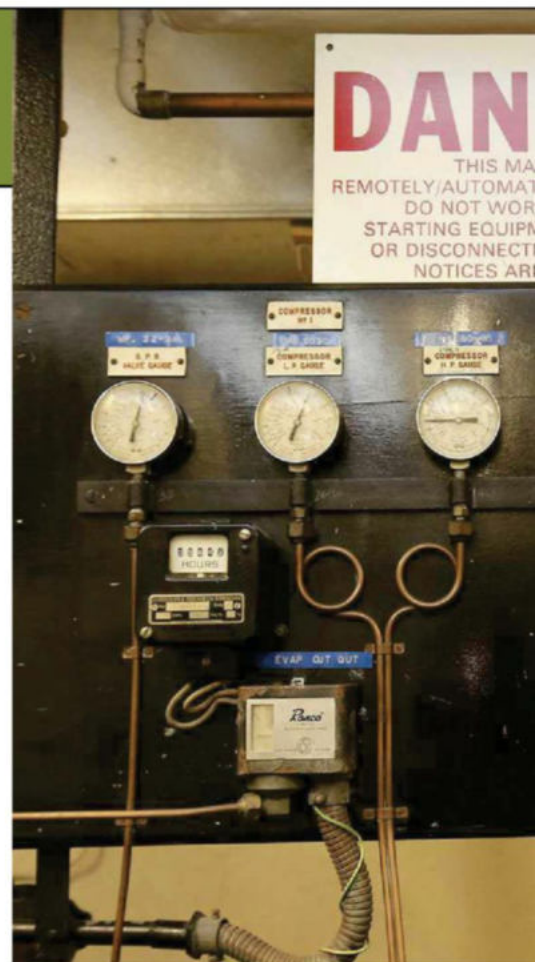
"It was their job to calculate where the bomb had hit, how big it was, the levels of radiation it was producing and where that radiation was heading," says Rory. "Using this information – gleaned from a network of 31 regional centres like York around the UK, plus 1,500 smaller sites – the authorities would then have hopefully been in a position to build up a picture of what was going on above ground: how many people were likely to have died, where it could move troops, was it safe to sound the all-clear?"

The York Cold War Bunker contained enough rations to sustain the volunteers for 30 days. As soon as you enter the blast-proof doors, it soon becomes clear that they would have spent those 30 days operating under the most trying of circumstances.

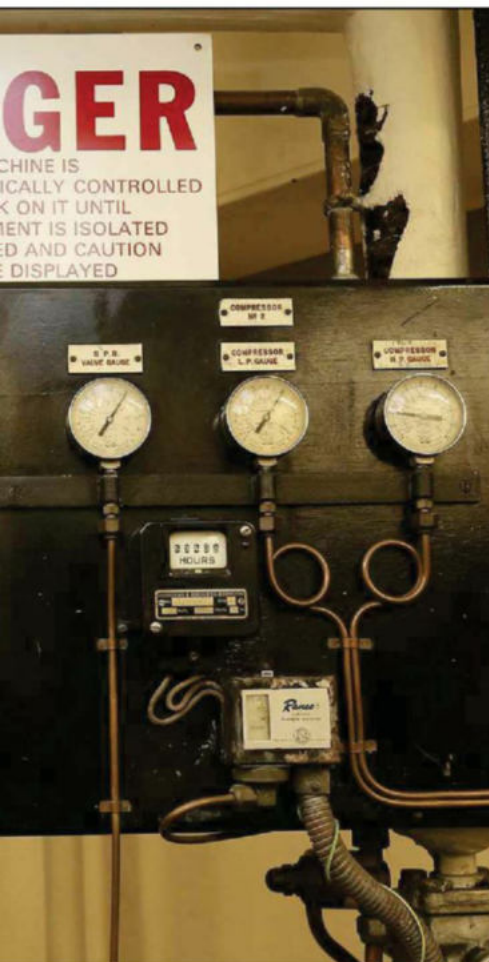
The first priority when entering the building was to remove radiation from your body – which meant showering three times, one of them with your clothes on. "This, they reckoned, would remove 90 per cent of the radiation," says Rory.

Descend a level and you reach the dormitory, which had the capacity for 20 people – the 60 workers operated on an eight-hour shift pattern. This floor also houses the toilets (which could be flushed just once every eight hours) and an ejector room designed to pump out human waste.

But it is when you descend yet another level, deep into the bowels of the bunker, that you enter the business area of the facility: the operations room. In the event of a nuclear attack, this would have been a whirl of activity – commanders sat around a triangulation table assessing the information they'd received from observation posts; plot-



GETTY IMAGES



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Part of the York Cold War
Bunker's ventilation system;
the nuclear fallout map;
desks from which staff would
have relayed fallout data to
regional government; the
entrance to the "stark,
utilitarian" building



An artist's impression of the Enola Gay B-29 Bomber flying away from Hiroshima moments after dropping an atom bomb over the Japanese city



ters tracking fallout directions in mirror-writing on Perspex boards; communication staff transmitting data to regional government via teleprinters; and observers poised to shout the code word 'Toscin' in the event of another bomb exploding.

"You can only imagine the enormous psychological strain these people would have been under when they were working down here," says Rory. "Not only would they have been cooped up in this concrete box under the ground for up to 30 days, under great pressure to get the job done, they would have been wondering what had happened to their family and friends – and considering what kind of world awaited them when they emerged back above ground." To hammer that point home, the operations room was decorated in a mixture of oranges – to help the volunteers focus – and calming greens and blues to reduce the risk of suicides.

One of the first things to strike you when you walk around the operations room is that the equipment within it is incredibly primitive. Looking back from the digital era, Perspex boards and chinagraph pencils appear almost quaintly antiquated. Yet the computer age did, to some extent, reach the bunker operations room – and it arrived in

the shape of AWDREY (aka the Atomic Weapons Detection Recognition and Estimation of Yield device). Able to 'see' up to 150 miles on a clear day, thanks to a sensor mounted on the bunker's roof, AWDREY transmitted data about nuclear explosions to all other group and section headquarters. Yet she wasn't infallible: lightning strikes and firework displays were known to send her haywire.

Exploding into action

For much of its operational history, the York Cold War Bunker would have stood silent – this inactivity punctured by regular training exercises (the observers were required to report to the bunker one night a week and every other Saturday, as well as taking part in quarterly nationwide operations). But there was one period when the bunker was fully manned 24-hours a day for a full week – and that was the Cuban missile crisis.

As US president John F Kennedy and Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev engaged in some high-stakes sabre-rattling (during which the Soviets deployed ballistic missiles just 90 miles from the US coast), the York observers were on red alert.

"The Cuban missile crisis was the closest

the world came to a nuclear war and the only time that this facility was at its highest state of readiness," says Rory. "With an American listening post at RAF Menwith Hill just down the road, the people here were well aware that, if a Third World War kicked off, York would be firmly in the firing line. It must have been a really scary time."

The world would find itself on the nuclear precipice once again 21 years later – this time as a result of a Nato military exercise called Able Archer. "This was just a standard exercise," says Rory. "But relations between the United States and the Soviets were so poor – and the exercise itself so realistic



Soviet missiles in Red Square during the May Day Parade of 1962, the year the world came closest to nuclear war

THE OPERATIONS ROOM WAS DECORATED IN A MIXTURE OF CALMING GREENS AND BLUES – TO REDUCE THE RISK OF SUICIDES

VISIT

York Cold War Bunker



Monument Close, York YO24 4HT
english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/york-cold-war-bunker/

were better than doing nothing and the York bunker could have played a valuable role depending on the strength and location of the bomb dropped,” says Rory. “In some ways, despite being semi-secret, their most important function was a public relations one – both in reassuring the public that the authorities had a plan, and also warning the Soviets that we were prepared for war and would fight back.”

On a national level, that fightback would have been co-ordinated from a government bunker deep in the Wiltshire countryside. Codenamed Turnstile, this huge, spartan facility would have housed Britain’s top political and military brass in the event of a nuclear war. There they would have been joined by broadcasters from the BBC, in order to transmit messages to what remained of the nation. “In fact, one of the ways in which Britain’s nuclear submarines were briefed to check if the levers of government were still operating was if they could pick up Radio 4,” says Rory.

Thankfully, these contingency plans were never implemented in a live crisis and, in 1991, after years of détente and the break-up of the Soviet Union, the York Cold War Bunker was decommissioned.

The Cold War might be over. The threat to Britain’s security might have changed beyond recognition. But 25 years later the York Cold War Bunker – which is open all year round – still stands as a fascinating, if unsettling, reminder of when Britons lived their lives in the shadow of nuclear war. **H**



Historical advisor: **Rory Cormac** (left), associate professor of international relations at the University of Nottingham.
 Words: Spencer Mizen

THE COLD WAR FIVE MORE PLACES TO EXPLORE

1 Greenham Common

NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE

Where women held a peace camp

Greenham Common was in the news throughout the 1980s as the RAF airbase – and its Cruise missiles – became the focus of nuclear disarmament protests, spearheaded by the Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp. Today the site is common land incorporating rare lowland heathland – with full public access.
greenham-common-trust.co.uk

2 Hack Green Nuclear Bunker

CHEESHIRE

Where you can see nuclear weapons

This 35,000 square foot underground facility would have been the centre of regional government had nuclear war broke out. Today this visitor attraction is home to decontamination facilities, operations rooms and the largest display of nuclear weaponry in Europe.
hackgreen.co.uk

3 Drakelow Tunnels

KIDDERMINSTER

Where a secret bunker was sited

This massive underground tunnel network began life as a factory for the Rover car company in the Second World War, before being converted into a top-secret nuclear bunker in 1961. Today, it is open to the public and is being converted into Britain’s biggest Cold War museum.
drakelow-tunnels.co.uk

4 The Imperial War Museum

SITES ACROSS THE UK

Where Cold War exhibits reside

The IWM is a treasure trove of exhibits dedicated to conflict over the past 100 years, including information on secret warfare in the Cold War, film footage of the Korean War and one of only two surviving models of the cancelled 1950/60s aircraft, the TSR-2. iwm.org.uk

5 The National Archives

KEW, LONDON

Where you can read official papers

There are few better places to gain an insight into government thinking during the Cold War than the National Archives. Documents available for public consumption at the archives include the authorities’ advice on how to protect yourself in the event of a nuclear attack.
nationalarchives.gov.uk

– that some members of the Soviet top brass were convinced that it was a cover for a genuine attack, and started agitating for a first strike themselves. That was the terrifying thing about the Cold War – nobody wanted a world war but, so pervasive was the paranoia in both camps, that misperception and miscommunication could easily lead to disaster.”

Third World War

The Able Archer incident may be nowhere near as notorious as the Cuban missile crisis but, in many ways, it was just as scary – and that’s because, by the 1980s, both armed camps possessed enough weapons to destroy the world many times over.

“In the 1950s, military planners regarded nuclear bombs as tactical weapons, launched in support of, for example, a massive invasion of Soviet land forces, and designed to target military facilities,” says Rory. “Within a few years, the bombs had become so numerous – and so powerful – that the planners were now targeting cities with the aim of wiping out entire populations. The Third World War would have been a war not of conquest, but annihilation.”

All of which begs the question: was there any point to the York Cold War Bunker? Why spend 30 days underground tracking the movement of radiation when all that remains a few metres above your head is a post-apocalyptic wasteland?

“You could argue that there was an element of futility to places like this but they



ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

FROM THE MAKERS OF **BBC** **HiSTORY**
MAGAZINE

Collector's Edition

THE QUEEN

A BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE GUIDE TO HER LIFE AND TIMES



**ONLY
£9.99
PLUS
FREE P&P***

On the 90th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II, this collector's edition from the makers of *BBC History Magazine* charts the life and times of Britain's longest-reigning monarch.

Inside you will:

- ◆ Trace the story of Elizabeth's life, from princess to queen
- ◆ Explore 90 years of social change during her lifetime
- ◆ Meet key people in her life, from family to ministers
- ◆ Follow in the Queen's footsteps on royal tours across countries and continents
- ◆ Share an insider view of the primary royal residence, Buckingham Palace
- ◆ Explore key events that shaped the Queen's world

Plus - subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* receive FREE UK postage on this special edition!



Order online www.buysubscriptions.com/queen
or call us on **0844 844 0250⁺** and quote **QUEHA16**

+ Calls will cost 7p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge. Lines are open 8am–8pm weekdays & 9am–1pm Saturday

* Subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* receive FREE UK P&P on this collector's edition.

Prices including postage are: £11.49 for UK residents, £12.99 for Europe and £13.49 for Rest of World (please note this title is not available for direct order in the US or Canada but is available in all good retailers now). All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery.

FIVE THINGS TO DO IN AUGUST

Shining a light

EXHIBITION / FREE ENTRY

COLOUR: The Art and Science of Illuminated Manuscripts

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Opens 30 July

☎ 01223 332900

● fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk



Celebrating the Fitzwilliam's bicentenary is a display of 150 magnificent illuminated manuscripts. They range from European prayer books to the Macclesfield Psalter, and from eighth-century Northumbria to 17th-century Nepal via Paris and Jerusalem. Highlights of Byzantine, Armenian, Persian and Sanskrit manuscripts are also included.

Part of the Viscount Fitzwilliam's collection with which the museum was established in 1816, a clause in the bequest prevents them from ever leaving the building and many are on display for the first time. Manuscripts are rich resources for European painting of the 6th to 16th centuries and, sheltered in books throughout their lives, they can survive the ravages of time better than panel and wall paintings.

The exhibition includes fascinating cutting edge research on the manuscripts. Merging art and science, it shares the research of MINIARE (Manuscript Illumination: Non-Invasive Analysis, Research and Expertise), an innovative project based at the Fitzwilliam. Collaborating with other scholars, the museum's scientists and conservators have employed pioneering analytical techniques to identify the materials and methods used by illuminators.

Combining amazing craftsmanship with gold and precious pigments, this is a rare chance to see some of the finest illuminated manuscripts in the world.



A c1460 manuscript from Padua in Italy, illustrating the resurrection

EXHIBITION

Fire! Fire!

Museum of London

23 July–17 April 2017

☎ 020 7001 9844

● museumoflondon.org.uk

A major exhibition marking the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of 1666 tells the story of London before, during and after the calamity. Explore the evidence, including rarely seen artefacts, to find out how the fire started; discover the stories of Londoners who were there; and learn how the city we know today rose from the ashes.



Roof tile from London's 1666 fire. Once flat, it was warped by temperatures of 1500°C

THEATRE

Horrible Histories - The Best of Barmy Britain

Apollo Theatre, London

5 August–3 September

☎ 0330 333 4809

● nimaxtheatres.com

This Birmingham Stage Company show marks the fifth anniversary of *Barmy Britain*, the longest-running children's play in West End history. The new production features the best bits from the hugely successful *Horrible Histories - Barmy Britain, Parts One, Two and Three* – including battling Boudica and the putrid plague!

NEW GALLERIES

Command of the Oceans

The Historic Dockyard, Chatham

Open now

☎ 01634 823800

● thedockyard.co.uk

The battle honours of HMS *Namur* – the world's first 'round bow' warship, built in 1756 – are greater even than those of HMS *Victory*. This mighty ship's skeleton recently went on display for the first time as the centrepiece of new permanent galleries at Chatham's dockyard, partially redesigned in a £9m project to incorporate the Command of the Oceans exhibit.

EVENT

Warfare through the Ages

6–7 August

The Tank Museum, Bovington

☎ 01929 462359

● tankmuseum.org

Living history encampments, drill displays, sieges, weaponry displays and period battles are among the highlights of this weekend looking at the history of warfare from the Middle Ages to the modern day. Re-enactment groups taking part include the Sealed Knot, the Southern Skirmish Association and elite units of the Napoleonic Association.

MY FAVOURITE PLACE

Vézelay, France



by **Julian Humphrys**

For the latest in our historical holidays series, Julian explores a Burgundian hilltop village that was a thriving medieval pilgrimage destination

When medieval pilgrims caught sight of Vézelay, they are said to have shouted “Mountjoy!” When you first glimpse this hilltop village, with its huge abbey church, it’s easy to understand their excitement.

It’s harder, however, to imagine just how important this place once was. Today it’s home to around 500 people, but in the early Middle Ages its population outstripped that of places such as Canterbury or York. Why? Because in the ninth century Vézelay’s abbey had acquired what were believed to be relics of Mary Magdalene.

A list of Vézelay’s visitors reads like a *Who’s Who* of early medieval Europe. Bernard of Clairvaux preached the Second Crusade here, Thomas Becket condemned Henry II here, Saint Louis made four pilgrimages, and Richard the Lionheart met France’s Philip Augustus here before they departed on the Third Crusade.

Indeed, Vézelay was always an important departure point, notably for pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, a fact recalled by the brass scallops

(the symbol of St James) set in the paving of the main street.

By the mid-13th century doubts about the relics’ authenticity led to a decline in Vézelay’s importance as a place of pilgrimage and with it the prosperity of the town itself. Vézelay’s misfortune has been our good luck: a lack of funds meant that neither town nor abbey were remodelled in later years. Its streets retain their medieval character, and the superb Romanesque architecture of its church remains largely unaltered, though it took a restoration job in the 1840s to spare it from utter ruin.

On arrival it’s tempting to head straight for the church, but I prefer to make it my final destination. I start at the bottom of the village and make my own pilgrimage up the single main street, the Rue Saint-Etienne.

When exploring an old town it’s worth looking up, to see the



The medieval hilltop village of Vézelay in north central France enjoys a spectacular location

original architecture above the more modern shopfronts, but in Vézelay you also need to look down. Because of its confined hilltop site, space was at a premium, so many of its stone buildings boast impressive vaulted cellars, often accessible by external doorways. The street (lined with tempting bookshops, art galleries and cafes) gradually climbs up to a square in front of the abbey church of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine.

Architecturally, the west front isn’t particularly distin-

guished. The north-west tower was never completed, giving it a lopsided look. But the interior is breathtaking. Go through into the narthex – a huge spiritual waiting room where pilgrims assembled. It was dimly lit so that when entering they would pass from its shadows into the vast Romanesque nave and brightly lit early Gothic choir.

Don’t miss the stone carvings on the tympanum above the portal into the nave: Christ sits with his apostles, who prepare to spread his word to the people of the world. Surrounding them are those people – Jews, Romans, Byzantines and Arabs – but also ‘monstrous races’: men with huge ears or dogs’ heads, giants and



A carving of St Benedict performing an exorcism, on a capital in the abbey church in Vézelay

BRIDGEMAN/ALAMY



“ Its streets retain their medieval character, and the superb Romanesque architecture of its church remains largely unaltered

pygmies, one using a ladder to mount his horse.

Pass through into the nave, admiring its attractive striped vaults. The capitals (upper parts) of its massive stone columns are adorned with scenes from the Bible – I’ve spent hours looking at them. You’ll eventually finish up at the bright east end, but your journey isn’t quite finished. A steep flight of steps leads down to the crypt, the oldest part of the church. We’re back in a place of shadow, where a recess houses

the reputed relics of Mary Magdalene.

If you need a bit of fresh air after all this contemplation, take a circular walk around the ramparts surrounding the village. The views of wooded hills, lush fields and vineyards are spectacular.

The church houses a community of nuns and monks who carry out services three times a day. Everyone’s welcome. Try to attend sung vespers – whatever your religious views it’s hard not to be moved by the beauty of this evening service.

Vézelay’s spiritual history and its World Heritage status mean it can be very crowded, especially during festivals. On the other

hand, the crowds do give a sense of what it was like at its peak. If you go out of season, you will practically have the place to yourself. I visited in December, and the only other person in the church was one of the nuns, kneeling on the cold flagstones, in silent prayer. **II**

Julian Humphrys is development officer for the Battlefields Trust. For details of his tour to Vézelay later this year, follow him at [@generaljules](https://twitter.com/generaljules)

Read more of Julian’s experiences in Vézelay at historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine/vezelay

Next month: Stephen Porter visits Delft in the Netherlands

ADVICE FOR TRAVELLERS

BEST TIME TO GO

Vézelay is vibrant and crowded in summer, while in winter it’s quiet and contemplative, although some of its restaurants and museums will be closed.

GETTING THERE

From Paris (fly or take Eurostar from UK), take the TER train from Paris’ Gare de Bercy to Sermizelles, about six miles north of Vézelay. Then catch a bus or taxi.

WHAT TO PACK

A pair of binoculars – really useful for picking out the detail in the beautiful Romanesque carvings of the abbey church.

WHAT TO BRING BACK

It’s Burgundy – of course it has to be wine! The local Bourgogne Vézelay is a Chardonnay.

READERS’ VIEWS

It is a magical place – full of spirituality and mysticism, and the abbaye is stunning!
Soo Hooper

Both the basilica and the little town are absolutely stunning.
Ann Sta

It is more than 30 years since I rode my bike through the town. We arrived the day before the Feast Day of St Mary Magdalene. It was stunning and timeless.
Liane Kennedy



Been there...

Have you been to **Vézelay**? Do you have a top tip for readers? Contact us via Twitter or Facebook

twitter.com/historyextra

facebook.com/historyextra

UNDISCOVERED MUSEUMS

Explore the fascinating collections and displays available throughout the UK in this selection of museums that you may not have yet discovered



1. National Coal Mining Museum

Experience the sights and smells of life underground as you discover one of Britain's oldest coalmines with an ex-miner at The National Coal Mining Museum for England. Visit the Museum's new exhibition, Heroes & Heroines, and submit your own hero/heroine nomination on their website. Admission to the Museum is FREE. For details on special events, please visit the website.

01924 848 806 | info@ncm.org.uk | www.ncm.org.uk

2. Dr Jenner's House, Museum & Garden

Discover the home of the country doctor whose work changed the world. It was in this house in the historic market town of Berkeley, Gloucestershire that Edward Jenner pioneered vaccination against smallpox. After finding out more about the remarkable Dr Jenner and his varied interests, you can explore an acre of grounds, including our newly created Physic Garden.

01453 810 631 | info@edwardjenner.co.uk | www.jennermuseum.com

3. Hollycombe Steam in the Country

Open Sundays and Bank Hol Mons, plus Tues-Sun from 2-29 August, Hollycombe promises a trip down memory lane. A Victorian and Edwardian Fairground, vintage fairground organs, steam railways, steam rollers and engines are set in delightful listed Woodland Gardens. Superb views of the South Downs from Hollycombe's famous Big Wheel! Hollycombe Steam in the Country, Liphook, Hants GU30 7LP.

01428 724 900 | info@hollycombe.co.uk | www.hollycombe.co.uk

4. Senhouse Roman Museum

Overlooking the coastal town of Maryport and the Solway Firth, the Museum houses an internationally significant collection of objects recovered from the adjacent Roman fort and civilian settlement. Visitors can discover what life and was like for the soldiers and their families on the Solway Coast Frontier of Hadrian's Wall. See website for opening times, admission charges and events programme.

01900 816 168 | www.senhousemuseum.co.uk

CHARITY



Not Forgotten THEN

Not Forgotten NOW



We were founded in 1920 to provide 'comfort, cheer and entertainment' to those wounded in the Great War. For 95 years we have continued to support men and women wounded in all wars and campaigns since. Each year thousands of serving personnel and veterans of all ages benefit from our unique programme of holidays, outings, concerts and the provision of TVs and TV Licences.

As a small non-fundraising charity we rely totally on the generosity of those who recognise the value of our work. To find out how you may be able to help us continue supporting those who have served their country and are suffering, please contact:



THE
NOT FORGOTTEN
ASSOCIATION
A TRI-SERVICE CHARITY FOUNDED IN 1920

2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH.

Tel: 020 7730 2400

Website: www.nfassociation.org

Email: info@nfassociation.org

Charity No 1150541



From Comradeship to Challenge™

PUBLISHERS

LOOKING TO BE PUBLISHED?

SUBMISSIONS AND SAMPLES WELCOMED. ALL WORK CONSIDERED. NO AGENT REQUIRED.

AUSTIN MACAULEY PUBLISHERS LTD.
6GC-33-01, 25 Canada Square
Canary Wharf, London, E14 5LQ
Tel: 0207 038 8212
www.austinmacauley.com
mail@austinmacauley.com

GENEALOGY

ANCESTORS

Discover Your Ancestors

Let our professional genealogists trace your family history nationally and internationally

Money back guarantee

For the best, most economical services write to:
Ancestorsgenealogy.co.uk
11 Crosbie Road,
Harborne, Birmingham
B17 9BG
(BHM)

0121 2464260

MUSEUMS

Stubbs and the Wild
25 June to 2 October 2016

Principal Sponsor
LOWELL LIBSON LTD
BRITISH ART

Exhibition Supported by
The Friends of the Holburne
Bath Spa University

THE HOLBURN MUSEUM
WWW.HOLBURNMUSEUM.ORG
Great Pulteney Street, Bath

PUBLISHERS

How To Become A Successful Writer!

As a freelance writer, you can earn very good money in your spare time, writing the stories, articles, books, scripts etc that editors and publishers want. Millions of pounds are paid annually in fees and royalties. Earning your share can be fun, profitable and creatively most fulfilling.

To help you become a successful writer we offer you a first-class, home-study course from professional writers – with individual guidance from expert tutors and flexible tuition tailored to your own requirements. You are shown how to make the most of your abilities, where to find ideas, how to turn them into publishable writing and how to sell them. In short, we show you exactly how to become a published writer. **If you want writing success – this is the way to start!**

Whatever your writing ambitions, we can help you to achieve them. For we give you an effective,

stimulating and most enjoyable creative writing course... appreciated by students and acclaimed by experts.

It's ideal for beginners. No previous experience or special background is required. You write and study at your own pace – you do not have to rush. **Many others have been successful this way.** If they can do it – why can't you?

We are so confident that we can help you become a published writer that we give you a **full refund guarantee**. If you have not earned your course fees from published writing by the time you finish the course, we will refund them in full.

If you want to be a writer start by requesting a free copy of our prospectus 'Write and be Published'. Please call our freephone number or visit our website NOW!

COURSE FEATURES

- 27 FACT-PACKED MODULES
- 2 SPECIALIST SUPPLEMENTS
- 20 WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
- ADVISORY SERVICE
- TUTORIAL SUPPORT
- FLEXIBLE STUDY PROGRAMME
- STUDENT COMMUNITY AREA
- HOW TO PRESENT YOUR WORK
- HOW TO SELL YOUR WRITING
- 15 DAY TRIAL PERIOD
- FULL REFUND GUARANTEE

Get Your FREE PROSPECTUS Today!

www.writersbureau.com



FREEPHONE 24 HOURS Quote: 1B15716

0800 856 2008



Rachel Dove "I won the 2015 Flirty Fiction Prima Magazine and Mills and Boon competition. The prize was £500, and the chance to work with Mills and Boon on my book which came out in April 2016.

"Also I have three stories in three anthologies with other authors – we've raised almost £2,000 for cancer charities."

George Stewart "I am delighted to tell everyone that the course is everything it says on the tin, excellent! I have wanted to write for years, and this course took me by the hand and helped me turn my scribbles into something much more professional. I am delighted that my **writing is being published and I am actually being paid**. All thanks to the Comprehensive Creative Writing course."



YES! Please send me free details on how to become a successful, freelance writer.

NAME

ADDRESS

POST CODE

EMAIL

Freepost RSSK-JZAC-JCJG

The Writers Bureau



Dept 1B15716

Manchester, M3 1LE



www.facebook.com/thewritersbureau
www.twitter.com/writersbureau

Members of BILD and ABCC

email: 16W1@writersbureau.com
Please include your name and address



CLOTHING

My Leather Manbag

Whether you are looking for a gift or just treating yourself, have a look at our extensive range of leather bags.

The Crazy Horse Cedar Mustang at £119

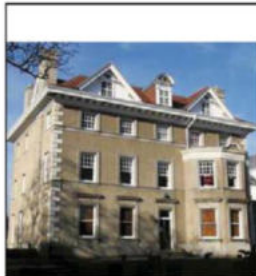
15% off



- Beautifully made luxury leather bags
- Exceptional service & fantastic value
- Briefcases, Travel Bags, Tablet Covers, Laptop Bags, Messenger Bags, Wallets and more...
- Manbags are good for girls too!

Please use code HS15 at checkout for 15% discount on all bags! Free delivery.
myleathermanbag.com 0333 1234 104

GENEALOGY



Guernsey's National Library

The Centre for Local History and Genealogy, offering an expert research service at competitive rates. Explore our extensive collection of books, maps, newspapers, prints and photographs in person, or contact us directly.



Priaulx Library, Candie Road,
St. Peter Port, Guernsey, GY1 1UG
Tel: (01481) 721998 web: www.priaulxlibrary.co.uk

MODEL KITS

EDDY The ENGINE



AN EDUCATIONAL KIT
A WORKING MODEL OF
AN EDWARDIAN ENGINE

A modern version of the
"DEMONSTRATION ENGINES"
of yesteryear!

SAFE 6 VOLTS DC.
OVER 100 PARTS.
4 TIMING ADJUSTMENTS.
6 ARMATURES.
NO SOLDERING OR MACHINING.

NEW
The OLD MODEL Co.
T: 01243 575403
WWW.OLDMODELS.CO.UK

FURNITURE



IAN EDWARDS

OF HARROGATE Est. 1970

Tel: **01423 500442**

for sales/enquiries or FREE brochure call - 01423 500442
www.iansbespokefurniture.co.uk



Handmade Bespoke Furniture
for CD's • LP's • DVD's & Books

The Old Chapel, 282 Skipton Road,
Harrogate, Yorkshire HG1 3HE

TO ADVERTISE
CONTACT
CHRIS O'NEILL,

CHRISONEILL@IMMEDIATE.CO.UK

HERITAGE

Anaesthesia Heritage Museum in London

Free entry

AAGBI FOUNDATION
ANAESTHESIA
HERITAGE
CENTRE



A unique medical science museum devoted to the history of anaesthesia, resuscitation and pain relief.

Visit www.aagbi.org/heritage

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 10am-4pm (last admission 3:30pm). Closed on Bank Holidays. Booking recommended. Email heritage@aagbi.org or call 020 7631 8865. General admission is free. Group visits of up to 20 people can be arranged at a small cost per person.



Find us at: The Anaesthesia Heritage Centre, AAGBI Foundation,
21 Portland Place, London W1B 1PY

Registered as a charity in England and Wales no. 293575 and in Scotland no. SC040697.

The Riddle of Shock New exhibition now open



AAGBI
FOUNDATION

Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland

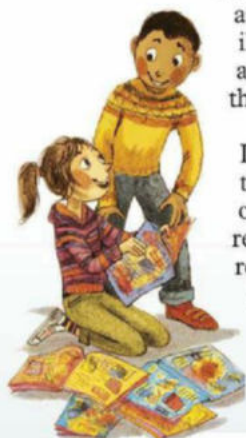
Inspiring young minds!

AQUILA Magazine is a big hit in the world of children's publishing, bringing a unique blend of challenging ideas and irreverent fun to thousands of young fans around the world every month.

What is so special about AQUILA Magazine? Well, it has no ads, fads or swipecy-buttons, just mind-stretching fun for the whole family to enjoy. It is carefully designed to harness children's desire to find out more about the world and how things work. Fostering their interest in science and the arts, it always has a healthy dose of humour and general knowledge thrown in for good measure.

What's inside? Every month the magazine introduces a fresh new topic – these are explored in an ingenious and exuberant fashion, with articles, experiments and creative things to make – the magazine also explores philosophy and wellbeing to make sure young readers maintain a balanced take on life. As well as all of this, **AQUILA** is beautifully illustrated by up-and-coming artists and includes photos and diagrams throughout.

If this all sounds too good to be true, then the evidence shows that thousands of teachers, parents and grandparents recognise a good thing when they see it, recommending **AQUILA** to their students and friends: the magazine receives nearly as many new orders by recommendation as it does from advertising.



SUBSCRIBE NOW

Full refund if you are not delighted, just let us know within 28 days.

£50 Annual subscription

Europe £55 Rest of World £65

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to Aquila.
(Name and address on the reverse, please.)

☐ Please charge my Mastercard / Visa / Maestro

Card no: ____ / ____ / ____ / ____

Expiry date ____ / ____ Security code ____

Post back to: **AQUILA, 67A Willowfield Road, Eastbourne, BN22 8AP**

Purchaser's Name _____
Address _____

Postcode _____

Phone number _____

Please send AQUILA to

Child's name _____
Address (if different) _____

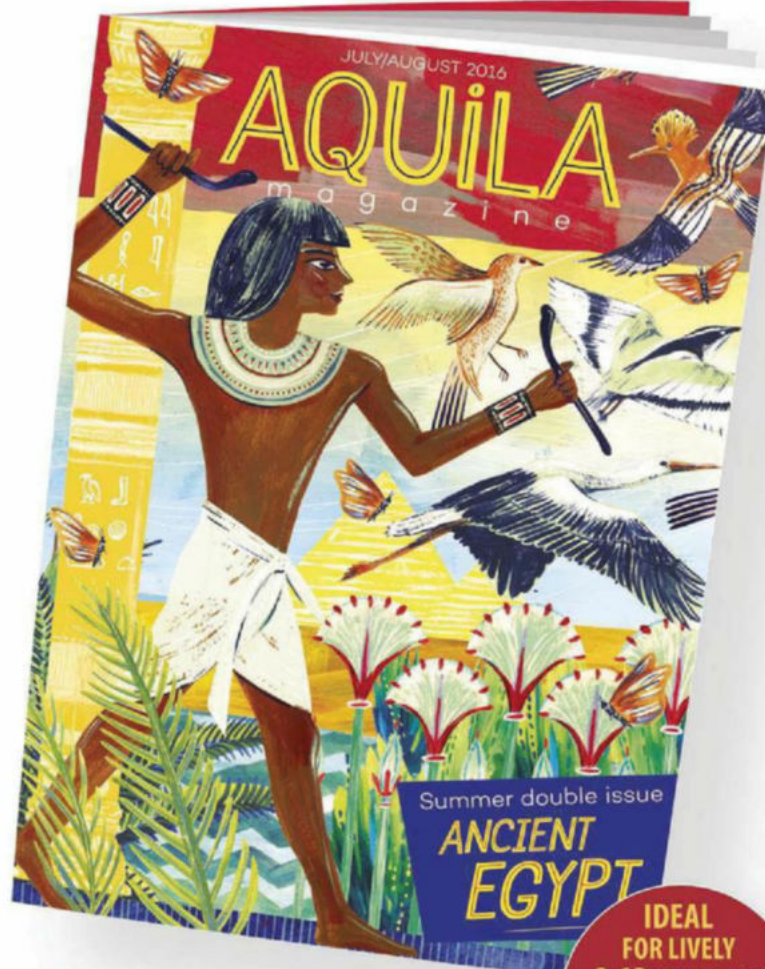
Postcode _____

☐ Start ASAP ☐ Birthday Gift

Child's birthday date _____

Gift message (20 words max) _____

_____ BH 16



Ancient Egypt

This double issue makes brilliant reading for the summer holidays!

Children can make a **Water Clock** and find out how the Ancient Egyptians learned to measure time; explore ancient **Star Science** in 'A Tomb with a View' and tackle some **Ancient Egyptian Maths** (including some astonishingly clever multiplication techniques!). **Howard Carter** describes the 'wonderful things' he found in **Tutankhamun's** tomb and Pharaoh **Amenhotep** pens a hilarious advice column. As well as baking some traditional **Fire-pit Bread** from scratch, make a **Matchbox Mummy** and enjoy a double helping of summer fun, games, quizzes and competitions – you'd have to be embalm-y to miss it!

New: THE AQUILA BOOK CLUB in association with BookTrust. We are reading *The Nowhere Emporium* by **Ross Mackenzie**.

IDEAL FOR LIVELY 8-12 YEAR OLDS

See sample magazine online

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ALL YEAR!

What could be more fun than a gift that keeps coming though the letterbox every month? If you wish the first issue can be dispatched in time for the special day, along with your gift message. **Coming up next: WWII, Bones and Codes & Coding.**



www.aquila.co.uk

Tel: 01323 431313

SUMMER SALE

Take advantage of our great trial offers and subscribe to your favourite magazine today. Or why not try a new one?

Try a subscription from £1*

Food and Travel



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 22%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 22%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 31%

Lifestyle



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 31%



12 ISSUES FOR £1
and then save 42%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 35%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 25%

Homes and Gardening



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 15%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 30%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 35%

Science and Nature



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 30%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 25%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 26%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 30%

History



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 29%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 26%

Sport



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 17%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 17%

Craft



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 18%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 18%



5 ISSUES FOR £5
and then save 18%

Great reasons to subscribe:

- Subscriptions from just £1*
- Save up to 42% after your trial period
- Enjoy easy and convenient delivery direct to your door
- Never miss an issue
- Perfect summer reading

Your two easy ways to order:

Order online at
www.buysubscriptions.com/summersale
or call our hotline: **0844 844 0260†**

SEE OUR
FULL RANGE
OF MAGAZINES
ONLINE

**OFFER
CODE
SS16SP**

The Direct Debit trial offers are available for UK delivery addresses only (excluding BFPO addresses). For overseas rates visit www.buysubscriptions.com/summersale. The discount follow-on rates are also payable by Direct Debit. All savings are calculated as a percentage of the full shop price, excluding Radio Times. The Basic Annual UK Subscription Rate of Radio Times is £131. This price is for 51 issues, which includes the Christmas double issue and a contribution towards postage. We reserve the right to limit the number of consecutive short term trial subscriptions a customer signs up for if their subscription is repeatedly cancelled during the trial. You are free to cancel your subscription at any time - if you cancel within 2 weeks of receiving your penultimate issue you will pay no more than the trial rate, this is with the exception of Radio Times and Match of the Day, which you will need to cancel 3 weeks before the trial is due to end. Radio Times is for 26 weekly issues (6 months). Match of the Day is for 13 weekly issues. This offer ends 31st August 2016. Calls will cost 7p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge.

MISCELLANY

Q&A



QUIZ

BY JULIAN HUMPHRYS

Try your hand at this month's history quiz

ONLINE
QUIZZES
historyextra.com
/bbchistory-
magazine/quiz

1. What links the armada, the rainbow and the ermine?

2. Aphra Behn was one of the first women in England to earn a living through her writing but how did she serve Charles II in 1666/67?

3. On 17 September 1908 Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge became the first person to do what?

4. Which five Mercian towns comprised the Five Boroughs of the Danelaw?

5. Who were the Queen's Maries?

6. This Wars of the Roses warrior is buried in Salisbury Cathedral. Who is he and what happened to him on 22 August 1485?



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. They're all names given to portraits of Elizabeth I
2. As a spy in Antwerp
3. Die in a plane crash
4. Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford
5. Four small girls chosen as maids of honour to five-year-old Mary, Queen of Scots when sent to France in 1548 as fiancée of dauphin François.
6. John, Baron Cheyne, unhorsed by Richard III

GOT A QUESTION?

Write to *BBC History Magazine*, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN. Email: historymagazine@historyextra.com or submit via our website: historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine



ILLUSTRATION BY GLEN MCBETH

Who was Vinegar Joe and why was he famous?

John Ellis, by email

A 'Vinegar Joe' Stilwell was one of the great characters of the Second World War. He is best known as chief of American forces in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theatre between 1942 and 1944, during which he was the chief of staff to the Kuomintang leader of China, Chiang Kai-shek. In 1943–44 he was also deputy to Lord Louis Mountbatten. He had one of the most difficult jobs of any multinational commander, dealing with probably the most complicated set of international relationships, involving the British, Americans and Chinese at every level of tactics and politics.

Stilwell's nickname reflects his caustic personality, famously blunt and hard-living. History has tended to treat him with passion and prejudice, and his reputation has suffered as a result, but by no means all of this is deserved.

To understand Stilwell it is critical to appreciate his motivations. His first priority was to defend and protect

American interests against what he considered to be the depredations of the nationalist Chinese who, in his view, sought only their own selfish advantage, and of Britain, which appeared to seek only the recovery of lost grandeur.

This imperative can easily be lost in a superficial reading of his letters and diary, in which he gave full and famous vent to his hatred of Chiang Kai-shek (calling Chiang 'peanut'). He also wrote of his belief that the 'limeys' (British) were dragging their heels in the fight against the Japanese, with the notable exception of General Bill Slim, the only Briton under whom he was prepared to serve. This patriotic mission must be understood in order to judge his actions.

Joseph Stilwell was recalled to Washington in late 1944. He died of stomach cancer in 1946.

Robert Lyman is a military historian whose latest book is *Headhunters* (Perseus, 2016)

SAMANTHA'S RECIPE CORNER



Every issue, picture editor **Samantha Nott** brings you a recipe from the past. This month it's a light and tasty snack from the Tudor kitchen

Spinach fritters

As in kitchens today, in many Tudor homes the frying pan was in daily use. From the late 16th century, as coal became more common than peat or wood as the main cooking fuel, metal frying pans started to replace earthenware pans that were prone to shatter on high heat. Lard or dripping was used to fry sausages and bacon, but clarified butter was more commonly used to cook fish, omelettes or pancakes.

Fritters were made by mixing eggs and a cereal – flour or breadcrumbs – with apples or spinach. This version is gently spiced with ginger and cinnamon, and I've added a pinch of salt to cater for modern palates.

INGREDIENTS

250g spinach
50g fresh white breadcrumbs
2 eggs, beaten
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground ginger
pinch of salt
50g butter (I used 25g)
1 tbsp sugar

METHOD

Wilt the spinach either in a saucepan with a little water over medium heat, or in the microwave. Squeeze as much liquid as possible from the cooked spinach. Chop finely and mix into a paste with the breadcrumbs and spices. Beat in the eggs. Heat the butter in a frying pan over high heat, drop in tablespoons of the batter and spread them into disks with the back of the spoon. Reduce the heat to medium and turn the fritters once they're starting to brown so they're fried on both sides. Serve immediately with a sprinkling of sugar.

VERDICT

"Delicious" – apart from the sugar sprinkled on top. This could be straight out of a modern cookbook.

Difficulty: 3/10

Time: 30 mins

Adapted from a recipe in Cooking & Dining in Tudor & Early Stuart England by Peter Brears (Prospect, 2015)

Spinach fritters make a tasty snack



Henry IV of France (Henry III of Navarre), as depicted in a late 16th-century painting

Q The King of Navarre is a lead character in Shakespeare's play *Love's Labour's Lost*. Where was the kingdom, and in which country is it today?

Margaret Rayner, via email

A In Shakespeare's comedy, King Ferdinand of Navarre and his companions pledge to avoid the company of women, and to spend three years eating frugally and studying. But then the Princess of France and her ladies turn up on diplomatic business, with amusing and romantic results.

Writing in the 1590s, the playwright would have known that Navarre would have carried an air of glamour for his audience. The play was written not long after King Henry III of Navarre – a capable soldier, pragmatic politician and famous womaniser – had effectively brought to an end the French Wars of Religion by renouncing Protestantism ("Paris is worth a mass") and taking the crown as Henry IV of France.

The Kingdom of Navarre has a long and very complicated history dating from the ninth century, when the Basque chieftain Íñigo Arista of Pamplona (Iruña in Basque) became king after a revolt against the Franks. From here it became part of the patchwork of

kingdoms and principalities that characterised medieval Europe; Navarre straddled the Pyrenees, though the bulk of its constantly changing territories were in north-east Spain.

Its ruling families intermarried with those of other countries (Henri IV's claim to France was based on his descent from Louis IX) until much of the kingdom was absorbed into Spain. At first it enjoyed considerable autonomy, but formally became a Spanish province in 1839. It remained a focus of Basque nationalism and played a key part in the Carlist wars and the Spanish Civil War.

Today, Navarre is an autonomous community of Spain. Local politics are characterised by tensions between institutional parties and Basque nationalism, as represented by constitutional movements and the armed separatist group ETA. South-western France, particularly the Basque-Navarre region, retains a lot of the Navarrese heritage of the medieval kingdom.

Eugene Byrne, author and journalist

ALAMY/EMMA LASHWOOD

PRIZE CROSSWORD

What museum was founded by Catherine the Great of Russia? (see 12 across)



CROSSWORD PRIZE



Book worth **£25** for 5 winners

The Last Royal Rebel: The Life and Death of James, Duke of Monmouth

This lively new book is an insightful account of the life of the illegitimate son of Charles II, described by Pepys as "the most skittish, leaping gallant that ever I saw", who launched an audacious but doomed rebellion in an attempt to depose his uncle, King James VII and II.

Published by Bloomsbury (UK), RRP £25

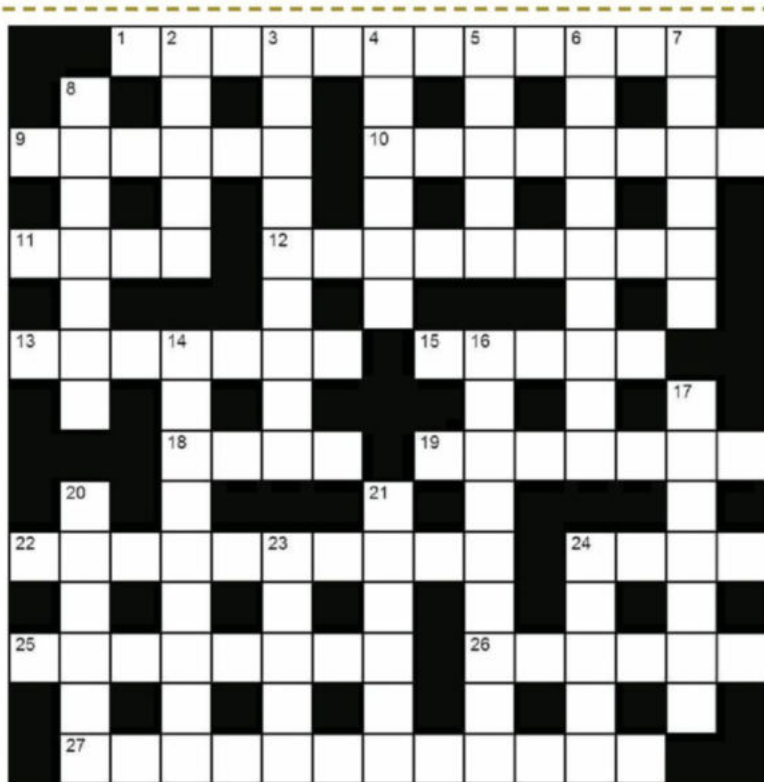
HOW TO ENTER Open to residents of the UK, (inc. Channel Islands). Post entries to **BBC History Magazine, August 2016 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA** or email them to **august2016@historycomps.co.uk** by 5pm on 10 August 2016. Entrants must supply full name, address and phone number. The winners will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. Winners' names will appear in the October 2016 issue. By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in full in the box below. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will use personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy at immediatemediaco.co.uk/privacy-policy/privacy/. Immediate Media Company Limited (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) would love to send you newsletters, together with special offers, and other promotions. If you would not like to receive these please write 'NO INFO' on your entry. Branded BBC titles are licensed from or published jointly with BBC Worldwide (the commercial arm of the BBC). Please tick here ☐ if you'd like to receive regular newsletters, special offers and promotions from BBC Worldwide by email. Your information will be handled in accordance with the BBC Worldwide privacy policy: bbcworldwide.com/privacy

Across

- 1 Swedish economist and statesman who became UN Secretary-General and won the Nobel Peace Prize (12)
- 9 Landlocked country of south Asia that, under treaties of 1910 and 1949, gave Britain and, later, independent India control in its foreign affairs (6)
- 10 It was often used as a regimental rallying-point for soldiers in battle, being protected by Colour Guards (8)
- 11 German industrial region, a primary target of Allied strategic bombing in the Second World War (4)
- 12 Catherine the Great's magnificent court museum, founded in 1764 (9)
- 13 A skep is a traditional wickerwork-and-mud version of this (7)
- 15 Country whose colonisation by Europeans was begun by Pedro de Valdivia in 1540 (5)
- 18 Member of a major religion founded in the Punjab region of south Asia in the late 15th century (4)
- 19 Bishop, Patriarch of Alexandria from 412 to 444, a chief opponent of Nestorius (2,5)
- 22 A network of late Roman defences against North Sea raiders built on the coast of south-east England (5,5)
- 24 English Quaker, William, who oversaw, and gave his name to, an American province in 1681 (4)
- 25 In the 1840s, this Native American tribe was forced to move from Florida to territory in Oklahoma (8)
- 26 Parts of people's incomes traditionally paid to the state or a religious body (6)
- 27 The capital of the Aztec empire built in 1325 in the marshes of Lake Texcoco (12)

Down

- 2 Name of the wealthy American family, prominent in politics, that produced the



- first woman to sit in the British parliament (5)
- 3 Term, Russian for 'minority', applied to one belonging to the faction opposing Lenin in the early 1900s (9)
- 4 Large platform in the Roman forum decorated with the prows of captured ships (6)
- 5 Fabric first used in the 1840s by a regiment of the British Indian Army (5)
- 6 London criminal court building on the site of Newgate Prison (3,6)
- 7 The ____ Scheme (or Venture), a costly, unsuccessful attempt in the late 1690s to establish a Scottish colony in Panama (6)
- 8 The first writer to be buried in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey (7)
- 14 For example, Herodotus, Isaiah Berlin or EP Thompson (9)
- 16 Name used by European colonists for the Khoikhoi people of southern Africa (9)
- 17 Small representation of a big cat, used as one of a group on a coat of arms (7)
- 20 Unit of weight used by ancient civilisations such as Hebrews, Greeks and Romans (6)

- 21 Vehicle that became a symbol of Henry Ford's efforts to bring the motor car to the masses (5,1)
- 23 Adherent of the school of philosophy founded by Zeno of Citium in the third century BC (5)
- 24 UNESCO World Heritage site in Jordan, ancient Nabataean capital (5)

Compiled by **Eddie James**

SOLUTION TO OUR JUNE CROSSWORD

Across: 1 Enclave 5 Boycott 10 Witan 11/19 Entente cordiale 12/27 John Bunyan 13 Racks 14 Ivan 15 Pleb 17 Buckshot 20 Ancestor 23 Blue 24 Huron 26/21 Marston Moor 28 Satrap 29 Swansea
Down: 2 New World 3 Luton 4/25A Venerable Bede 6 Oates 7 Cuneiform 8 The Raj 9 Peacock Throne 16 Bundesrat 18 Strongbow 22 Glamis 24 Hatra 25 Benin

FIVE WINNERS OF PRIDE AND PUDDING

M Sinnatt, Hampshire; S Kitching, Bedale; T Carroll, Edwalton; D Hughes, Buckley; J Leighfield, Cannock

CROSSWORD COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

- The crossword competition is open to all residents of the UK (inc. Channel Islands), aged 18 or over, except Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited employees or contractors, and anyone connected with the competition or their direct family members. By entering participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and that their name and county may be released if they win. Only one entry permitted per person.
- The closing date and time is as shown under How to Enter, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will not publish your personal details or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at immediatemediaco.co.uk/privacy-policy/
- The winning entrants will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. The prize and number of winners will be as shown on the Crossword page. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited's decision is final and no correspondence relating to the competition will be entered into. The winners will be notified by post within 20 days of the close of the competition. The name and county of residence of the winners will be published in the magazine within two months of the closing date. If the winner is unable to be contacted within one month of the closing date, Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner-up.
- Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions or to cancel, alter or amend the promotion at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control. The promotion is subject to the laws of England.

What criminal court was built near this site...? (see 6 down)



**SPECIAL
OFFER** FOR
BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE READERS



FOCUS MAGAZINE

THE ULTIMATE MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS MINDS

Subscribe today and receive **5 issues for just £5***

YOUR SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

- Trial your first 5 issues for just £5*
- After your trial period, continue to **save a fantastic 35%** on the shop price, paying just £16.57 every 6 issues by Direct Debit
- Receive every issue delivered direct to your door with **free UK delivery**

**NEW
LOOK**



SUBSCRIBE TO BBC FOCUS MAGAZINE TODAY

PLEASE QUOTE **FOHIHA16**



ORDER ONLINE AT

WWW.BUYSUBSCRIPTIONS.COM/FOCUS



OR CALL

0844 844 0257

*This offer is only available to UK residents paying by Direct Debit. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. After your first five issues, your subscription will continue at £16.75 every 6 issues, saving you 35% on the shop price. If you cancel within two weeks of receiving your second issue, you will pay no more than £5. **Offer ends 31 December 2016.**

+ Calls will cost 7p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge. Lines are open weekdays 8am to 8pm and Saturdays 9am -1pm. If calling from overseas, please call +44 1795 414699.

EDITORIAL

Editor Rob Attar robertattar@historyextra.com

Deputy editor Charlotte Hodgman

Acting deputy editor Sue Wingrove suewingrove@historyextra.com

Reviews editor Matt Elton mattelton@historyextra.com

Production editor Spencer Mizen

Picture editor Samantha Nott samnott@historyextra.com

Art editor Susanne Frank

Deputy art editors Rachel Dickens, Rosemary Smith, Sarah Lambert

Picture researcher Katherine Hallett

Digital editor Emma Mason emmamason@historyextra.com

Website assistant Ellie Cawthorne

**IMMEDIATE
MEDIA**

Vol 18 No 8 – August 2016

BBC History Magazine is published by Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited under licence from BBC Worldwide who help fund new BBC programmes.

BBC History Magazine was established to publish authoritative history, written by leading experts, in an accessible and attractive format. We seek to maintain the high journalistic standards traditionally associated with the BBC.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Advertising manager

Sam Jones 0117 300 8145

Sam.Jones@immediate.co.uk

Brand sales executives

Sam Evanson 0117 314 8754

Sam.Evanson@immediate.co.uk

Scarlett Rossiter 0117 300 8532

Scarlett.Rossiter@immediate.co.uk

Classified sales executive

Chris O'Neill 0117 300 8542

Chris.O'Neill@immediate.co.uk

Group direct marketing manager

Laurence Robertson 00353 5787 57444

Subscriptions director Jacky Perales-Morris

Direct marketing executive Natalie Medler

US representative Kate Buckley

buckley@buckleypell.com

PRESS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Press officer Dominic Lobley

020 7150 5015

dominic.lobley@immediate.co.uk

SYNDICATION

Head of licensing & syndication

Tim Hudson

International partners' manager

Anna Brown

PRODUCTION

Production director Sarah Powell

Production co-ordinator Emily Mounter

Ad co-ordinator Jade O'Halloran

Ad designer James Croft

IMMEDIATE MEDIA COMPANY

Publisher David Musgrove

Publishing director Andy Healy

Managing director Andy Marshall

CEO Tom Bureau

Deputy chairman Peter Phippen

Chairman Stephen Alexander

BBC WORLDWIDE

Director of editorial governance

Nicholas Brett

Director of consumer products and publishing Andrew Moultrie

Head of UK publishing Chris Kerwin

Publisher Mandy Thwaites

Publishing co-ordinator Eva Abramik

UK.Publishing@bbc.com

www.bbcworldwide.com/uk--anz/

ukpublishing.aspx

abc Jan-Dec 2015
97,527

NRS October 2014 – Sept 2015
348,000

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

NEXT MONTH

SEPTEMBER ISSUE ON SALE 11 AUGUST 2016



The Great Viking Army

Julian D Richards shows how new research is transforming our understanding of the Norse warriors who battled the Anglo-Saxons

The Great Fire of London

Alexander Larman on how the 1666 inferno stirred up religious tensions in England

The other Henry V

The medieval king was far more than just a warrior, writes Malcolm Vale



The Suez crisis

Alex von Tunzelmann reflects on the events of 1956 that came to symbolise Britain's decline as a global power





"He played a massive role in the Allied victory, against all the odds. This was a pilot who lost both legs in a flying accident. I can't think of a life story more packed with courage and fortitude"

David Cameron chooses

Douglas Bader

(1910–82)

Sir Douglas Bader was the best-known RAF flying ace of the Second World War. Both of his legs were amputated following a crash in 1931, yet after the outbreak of war he talked his way back into the RAF and was promoted to squadron leader, then group captain. He was credited with 22 solo aerial victories, a further four shared victories and several 'probables'. Taken prisoner after bailing out over France in 1941, he made several escape attempts before being transferred to Colditz, where he spent the rest of the war. His story was told in Paul Brickhill's book *Reach for the Sky* (1954), made into a hit film.

When did you first hear about Douglas Bader?

As a boy. I grew up reading his biography *Reach for the Sky* and watching the film starring Kenneth More.

What kind of person was he?

Competitive, unruly, foolhardy – but also brilliant, brave and hugely talented.

What made him a hero?

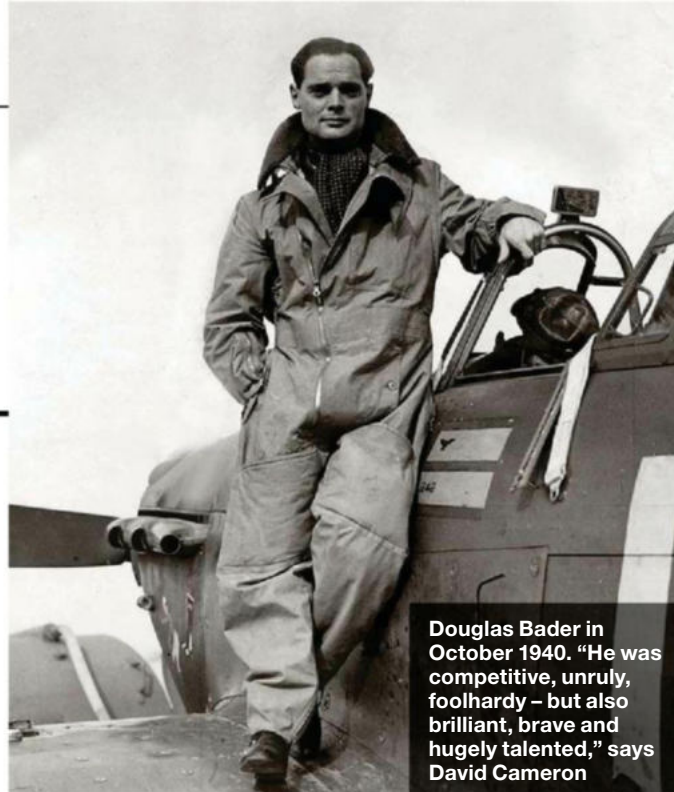
He played a massive role in the Allied victory – and did so against all the odds. This was a pilot who lost both legs in a flying accident, yet resolved to get back into the RAF. He spent the rest of his life helping disabled people and touring the world to speak about his experiences. He continued working right up until his death. I can't think of a life story more packed with courage and fortitude – and it should inspire pride in every single Briton.

What was Bader's finest hour?

There were so many – every one of his aerial victories was an incredible feat. But I think his best moment was probably when he was re-admitted to the RAF. Think about it: several years after losing your legs in an aerobatic stunt, after cajoling so many people, after repeatedly being told no – imagine being airborne once again. Not only did Bader prove to his superiors that he was capable of flying, he turned the plane upside down, just for good measure.

Is there anything you don't particularly admire about him?

He has been criticised for some of his views and his outspoken



Douglas Bader in October 1940. "He was competitive, unruly, foolhardy – but also brilliant, brave and hugely talented," says David Cameron

manner. There was once talk of him becoming an MP after the war, but he chose a career with Shell instead, because it meant he could carry on flying. It was probably for the best – I think he was probably better off in the cockpit than at the dispatch box.

Can you see any parallels between his life and your own?

None. But his widow met my father after my father lost a leg. I remember how her encouragement meant a lot. My father was also disabled. To be so in the 1930s and 1940s was pretty tough. But still, as a young man he played tennis competitively. And he built up a successful career as a stockbroker. He never let his disability affect him or hold him back.


You studied history A-level but not at university. Do you ever wish you had?

Yes, I do. I studied politics, philosophy and economics, which of course takes in so much of global history. But I think history as a subject is incredibly important – especially British history. It's vital we know who we are as a country. That's why, when we came into government, we were so determined to put British history back at the forefront of the school curriculum. I want children growing up today to be inspired by heroes of history like Douglas Bader – to know about the people who made Britain great.

If you could meet Bader, what would you ask him?

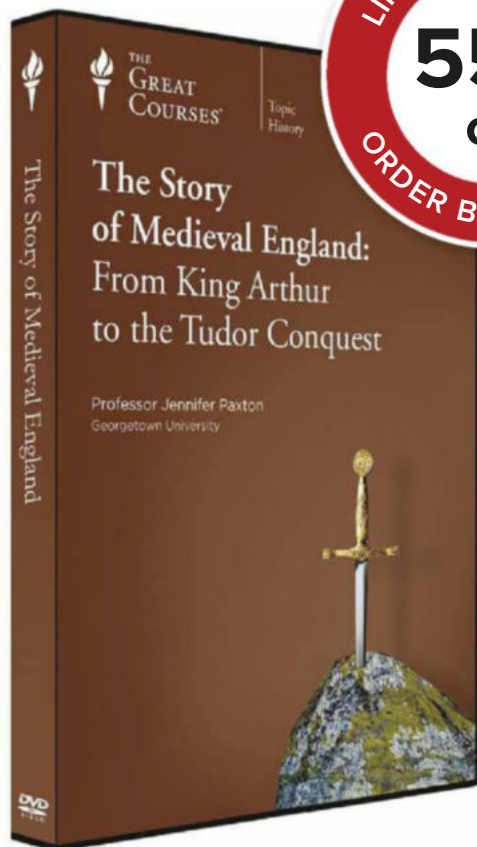
I'd like to know what he'd have done if he'd been unable to rejoin the RAF. Where might he have channelled his energy and talents? I'd also like to know what he was thinking during crucial moments – what's it like to be 3,000 feet in the air, over occupied France, face to face with a German Messerschmitt? What was it like to bail out?

Do you think you would have made a good fighter pilot?

No. They're known as 'the Few' for a reason. This was a special breed of men, whose dedication and daring saved our country. We all owe them so much, but very few of us could do what they did. That said, I would love to have had the chance to fly a Spitfire! 

David Cameron was talking to York Membery

David Cameron is prime minister of the United Kingdom



Discover the True Story of Medieval England

While many of us search for the roots of our world in the contributions of modern England, it's the *medieval* history of this country where our search must begin. Understanding this era is key to understanding many of the social, political, and cultural legacies that enrich the 21st century.

The Story of Medieval England: From King Arthur to the Tudor Conquest tells the remarkable drama of a tumultuous thousand-year period in English history; one dominated by war, conquest, and the struggle to balance the stability of royal power with the rights of the governed. Delivered by distinguished scholar and award-winning professor Jennifer Paxton, these 36 lectures feature a level of detail and attention that offers fresh insights into medieval England: its rulers and subjects, its times of war and peace, its literature and legends, and much more.

Offer expires 14/08/16

THEGREATCOURSES.CO.UK/4UKHM
0800 298 9796

The Story of Medieval England: From King Arthur to the Tudor Conquest

Taught by Professor Jennifer Paxton
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

LECTURE TITLES

1. From Britannia to Britain
2. Roman Britain and the Origins of King Arthur
3. The Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms
4. The Conversion of the Anglo-Saxons
5. Work and Faith in Anglo-Saxon England
6. The Viking Invasions
7. Alfred the Great
8. The Government of Anglo-Saxon England
9. The Golden Age of the Anglo-Saxons
10. The Second Viking Conquest
11. The Norman Conquest
12. The Reign of William the Conqueror
13. Conflict and Assimilation
14. Henry I—The Lion of Justice
15. The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign
16. Henry II—Law and Order
17. Henry II—The Expansion of Empire
18. Courtly Love
19. Richard the Lionheart and the Third Crusade
20. King John and the Magna Carta
21. Daily Life in the 13th Century
22. The Disastrous Reign of Henry III
23. The Conquests of Edward I
24. Edward II—Defeat and Deposition
25. Edward III and the Hundred Years' War
26. The Flowering of Chivalry
27. The Black Death
28. The Peasants' Revolt of 1381
29. Chaucer and the Rise of English
30. The Deposition of Richard II
31. Daily Life in the 15th Century
32. Henry V and the Victory at Agincourt
33. Henry VI—Defeat and Division
34. The Wars of the Roses
35. Richard III—Betrayal and Defeat
36. England in 1485

The Story of Medieval England: From King Arthur to the Tudor Conquest

Course no. 8410 | 36 lectures (30 minutes/lecture)

SAVE UP TO £45

DVD ~~£79.99~~ **NOW £34.99**
CD ~~£54.99~~ **NOW £34.99**

+£2.99 Postage and Packing

Priority Code: 130319

For over 25 years, The Great Courses has brought the world's foremost educators to millions who want to go deeper into the subjects that matter most. No exams. No homework. Just a world of knowledge available anytime, anywhere. Download or stream to your laptop or PC, or use our free mobile apps for iPad, iPhone, or Android. Over 550 courses available at www.TheGreatCourses.co.uk.

The Great Courses®, 2nd Floor, Mander House, Mander Centre
Wolverhampton, WV1 3NH. Terms and conditions apply.
See www.TheGreatCourses.co.uk for details.



C8 Flyer Automatic 44mm



**Christopher
Ward**

christopherward.co.uk